THE CAUSES OF STRESS AND ITS MANAGEMENT BY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE TSHWANE SOUTH DISTRICT

by

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DECLARATION

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I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at the University of South Africa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

JJ van Staden 31 January 2020

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ABSTRACT

A quantitative, descriptive method was used in this study. A purposeful sample of 239 (N=239) participants was chosen. At a theoretical level, the study provided insight into the causes of stress among educators, the impact of stress on them and the influence of school management teams to support educators in the management of their stress. The literature review confirmed that stress of educators is caused by internal and external factors. It also confirmed that stress may lead to physical and mental illnesses and may influence the emotional state of an educator. The literature confirmed that where school management teams support educators, it reduces the stress levels of the educators. From an empirical perspective, the study confirmed that external factors such as long working hours and workload do have an impact on the educator's stress levels. This then leads to educators feeling irritated, exhausted and burned out. On the role of school management teams supporting educators to manage the stress levels, the empirical outcome was neutral.

Key terms: curriculum, educators, learners, parents, private primary schools, quantitative research, school management teams, stress, workload, job satisfaction

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Educators seem to constantly complain at social events, on social media and to other educators about their stress levels, conflict experienced and feeling overworked. According to Johnson (2018:27), teaching can be an emotional experience. Schools are under constant pressure from the government, parents and learners due to, among other things, elevated expectations, poor discipline, lack of resources, and the increased expectations accompanying the general role of the educator (Ryan, Von der Embse, Pendergast, Seaki, Segool & Schwing, 2017:3). The above-mentioned pressures and other latent pressures can also lead to an increase in the stress levels of the educators. This may also result in high educator turnover in schools and low job performances (Ansley, Meyers, Mcphee & Varjas, 2018). It is thus important that the stress and conflict levels among educators should be decreased or at least managed effectively.

Teaching can be an emotional practice and hence educators' social and emotional skills should be strengthened to empower them to manage the personal stress they experience more effectively (Johnson, 2018:27). School management teams should provide effective systems and a school climate that mitigates the causes of and reduces the stress and conflict levels of educators, hence making a difference in creating more learning opportunities for learners. However, it seems as if many schools tend to leave stress coping strategies to individual educators (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2012:229). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to establish the perceived organisational stress that educators experience, establish how it affects them physically, mentally and emotionally, and finally establish if there is a significant link between educator stress and the management or lack thereof by school management teams.

In this study relating to the causes of educators' stress and its management by school management teams, the intention was to investigate the causes of educator stress and how it can possibly be more effectively managed by school management teams.

Educators are important for the future of the South African education system and economy, and hence their emotional and physical well-being should be monitored and managed. This research will help school management teams to realise which organisational factors cause stress, how educators are affected by the phenomenon and show whether the school management teams can have a positive influence on these stress levels of educators in this area. In the study the purpose was to establish if there was a significant correlation between the dependent variable (factors causing stress) and the independent variables (biographic and demographic variables such as school management teams).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Stress among educators has been a reality for years, but due to many factors, not least among the many are the increasing number of learners, changing of curricula and the advanced pace of life accompanied by enormous amounts of available literature. Hence, learners now need to cope with large amounts of knowledge and overloaded curricula that accompany this. This tends to lead to educators experiencing greater accountability demands and the accompanying stress which can be both mentally and physically unhealthy as well as having a negative influence on the school and classroom environment. Many school management team members may not always be knowledgeable about the educator's daily routines and administrative obstacles or how to support the educator with his or her daunting task, resulting in educators sometimes being left alone to cope with these aspects.

Various studies confirmed that stress is part of a teacher's daily work environment and is caused by factors such as workload, lack of parental involvement, negative educator attitudes, negative attitudes and poor discipline among learners, fulfilment of several demanding roles, including extra administrative duties. (Akhondi, Pourshafei & Asgari, 2017:13-14; Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienuis, 2008; Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010; Kyriacou, 2001; Rothmann, 2003:17; Ryan et al., 2017:2-3; Schulze & Steyn, 2007).

School management teams often neglect to assist teachers with stress coping strategies or stress coping strategies are left to the individual teachers (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2012:229). To assist teachers in the management of stress, school management teams

should define clear and realistic expectations of educators, provide social support, good communication and show appreciation of educators (Akhondi et al., 2017:24; Griffith, Steptoe and Cropley, 1999; Ma & Mac-Millan, 1999; Rothmann, 2003:191).

The studies were all done in public schools and none in private primary schools, causing a knowledge gap.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of the study was to help school management teams to realise what factors cause the stress of educators, how they are affected by this phenomenon and to show associations or relationships between the management by school management teams and the stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

The objectives for this research were to:

Objective 1: Search the literature to investigate which organisational factors are deemed to be responsible for stress levels among educators.
Objective 2: Use a structured questionnaire to investigate the perceptions of educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District to determine their extent of agreement or disagreement with the factors found in the literature.
Objective 3: Establish whether there is a significant correlation between the perceived stress levels and the management thereof by school management teams in private schools in the Tshwane South District.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

1.4.1 Main research question

To what extent do educators perceive that school management teams know the causes of stress and how to manage it in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District?

1.4.2 Sub-research questions

Sub question 1: What factors cause the stress of educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District?
Sub question 2: How are educators affected by this phenomenon in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District?
Sub question 3: Is there an association or relationship between the management by school management teams and the stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District?

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

H_o. There is statistically no significant relationship between the causes and level of educator stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.
H_a. There is statistically significant relationship between the causes and level of educator stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research is influenced by the researcher's theoretical framework or research paradigm. According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006:194) a paradigm provides the basis for research decisions on design, methodology, methods and literature.

A research paradigm is a basic set of beliefs, principles, and assumptions that guide how a researcher views the world and interprets and acts within that world. It is the philosophy through which the researcher examines the methodological aspects of the research project to determine the research methods that will be used and guide the way in which data will be analysed (Creswell, 2007:19; Kivinja & Kuyini, 2017:26). A research paradigm is expressed in a particular epistemology, ontology and axiology that guide the researcher towards a particular methodology (Kivinja & Kuyini, 2017:26-29; Wahyuni, 2012:69).

The three main research paradigms mostly used in research are known as the positivist, interpretivist/constructivist paradigms, and critical enquiry. A fourth research paradigm comprising of a mixture of the other three paradigms is named the pragmatic paradigm (Creswell, 2007:19; Creswell & Miller, 1997:33-34; Elshafie, 2013:5; Kivinja & Kuyini, 2017:30; Shah & Al-Bargi, 2013:253).

After careful analysis of the various research paradigms, I decided to conduct this research within the positivist research paradigm, subscribing to its epistemological and ontological philosophies that informed my methodology. Positivists strive to understand the social world like the natural world by applying scientific, empirical methods (experiments, questionnaires, observation, and mathematical or logical methods) to measure and understand social reality. The researcher assumes that reality exists independently of persons. Positivists believe that there are laws governing the social world, and by applying scientific methods, it is possible to frame these laws and present them through factual declarations (Pham, 2018:22; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:53). I now describe the concepts “epistemology”, “ontology”, and “axiology” within the positivist paradigm.

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge or the way of knowing the world. It requires the researcher to ask what acceptable knowledge is and what is known to be acceptable, true and valid that can be taken as evidence. The epistemological position of positivists is that of objectivism where the researcher studies the phenomena that exist independently and without any interference. Symbols and language are used to describe phenomena in their real form (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:52).
Ontology refers to a branch of philosophy concerned with reality – how do researchers view reality, the nature of the human beings in the real world and how it influences human beings’ behaviour? The ontological position of positivists is that of realism. The reality is objective and singular, separate from the researcher. As reality is context free, different researchers working in circumstances will converge to the same conclusions about a given phenomenon (Creswell, 2007:16; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:53; Robson, 2011:525).

Axiology refers to how the researcher is a moral (ethical) person in the world, by defining, evaluating and understanding concepts of right and wrong behaviour relating to the

research. I complied with the prescribed ethical requirements and attempted to provide a balanced axiology through the understanding and recognition of the role my values and perceptions may have had on the collection and analysis of the data and the reporting on the findings (Creswell, 2007:18; Elshafie, 2013:5; Kivinja & Kuyini, 2017:27; Robson, 2011:525; Rossman & Rallis, 2012:69; Wahyuni, 2012:71).

Given that I subscribed to the epistemological, ontological and axiological philosophies of the positivist research paradigm, a quantitative research approach appeared to be the most suitable as it is deductive in nature with objectivity emphasised. The objectivity is maximised by applying mostly numerical data and statistics (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:4-5, 14, 29; Rossman & Rallis, 201, 6-7).

Dialectical analysis can prove to be a powerful lens for understanding the tensions present in a system such as the educational system. As such it can be used as a theoretical framework to assist with the analysis of data. In a hierarchical and bureaucratic system, such as the education system, characterized by mandates to measure educator performance, and by implication learner performance and indeed school performance in external examinations, it is highly likely that dialectical tensions will be present. Hence, efforts to improve educator performance are likely to lead to increased levels of stress among educators, which could lead to a negation of the attempt to improve educator performance in the first place. As the research was conducted in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District, the dialectical tension may be exacerbated by parents believing that by paying a premium for education they can expect a much higher-level performance from the educators, adding more stress to the educators. Managing such paradoxical situations is extremely difficult as one needs to manage both sides of the paradox, namely increased educator performance and the accompanying stress and its possible consequences. As part of the methodology, it required a dialectical approach whereby the interrelated tensions and contradictions of the educators' stress and the management thereof are viewed as interrelated, rather than attempting to reify one perspective or the other (Page, 2016).

Methodology is the logical application of methods, approaches and procedures to produce data about the world. It includes assumptions made and limitations encountered,

and how they are mitigated or minimised (Elshafie, 2013:5; Kivinja & Kuyini, 2017:28; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:52; Robson, 2011:525).

A very important relationship exists between the research paradigm and methodology, as the methodological implications of the choice of paradigm influence the hypothesis, research question(s), sample, data collection instruments, procedures and analysis.

1.7 RESEARCH METHOD

In this quantitative study a descriptive method was used. A purposeful sampling method was also used as the approached population was identifiable, namely educators at private primary schools in the Tshwane South District, Gauteng Province. Data was collected by distributing structured questionnaires which were sent via email or followed by educators via a link to an online version of the questionnaire.

1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

Burnout: Physical and emotional exhaustion due to negative attitude, being overworked and stress.

Chronic stress: The response to emotional pressure suffered for a prolonged period of time in which individuals perceive that they have little or no control.

Depression: A mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest.

Educators: Any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services at a school (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Job satisfaction: A feeling of fulfilment or enjoyment that a person derives from their job.

Learners: Any person receiving education or is obliged to receive education in terms of the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a).

Private primary schools: Schools that are registered or deemed to be registered as an independent school in terms of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and which enrols learners in one or more grades between grade one and seven.

School environment: Is broadly characterised by its facilities, classrooms, school-based health supports, and disciplinary policies and practices.

School management teams (SMTs): Group of people involved in decision making and management of a school. The principal mostly acts as team leader.

Stress: A mental or emotional strain or tension due to adverse or demanding circumstances.

Tshwane South District: District allocated by the Department of Education, Gauteng Provincial Administration.

1.9 CHAPTER DIVISION

The study is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 provides the context of the research. It presents the background and rationale for the study, the research problem, the main research and sub-questions, hypothesis, theoretical framework, methodology and clarification of certain concepts.

Chapter 2 reviews the construct of educator stress. It focuses on the concept of stress, the causes of stress, the impact of stress (at school and in personal life) and the management thereof.

In chapter 3 a complete description of the research design and methodology, inclusive of the research approach, population and sampling, data collection, and data management and analysis are explained. It also includes limitations, ethical consideration, validity and reliability.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of the data.

Chapter 5 reports on the research findings, contribution and recommendations for future research.

1.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 provides the background to this study and the problem statement. It provides insight into the purpose of the study, methods used to approach the study and the clarification of concepts used. Chapter 2 is a literature review of what causes stress to educators, how they are affected by it and how management teams manage this issue.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Studies have shown that South Africans in general suffer from stress. In the teaching profession all the aspects of the South African societal stress together with physical health consequences are prevalent amongst educators in the workplace as well (Van Tonder & William, 2009). Stress moves parallel with the challenges of an educator. When an educator's challenges increase, the educator's stress increases; when the challenges decrease, the educator's stress decreases (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). The demand on educators seems to exceed their resources and this leads to their perceived stress. Although adequate resources are important in supporting educators in their roles, life skills in stress management and coping are also of importance for educators (Ansley, Houchins & Varjas, 2016). Educators need these coping skills to be able to address the multiple demands of their jobs (Jennings et al., 2009). Both physical and mental aspects of the educator's health are being affected due to stress and Oliver and Venter (2003) state that stress is becoming widespread. As stress is endemic to teachers who teach diligently with commitment, it is important that they at least are able to counteract the demands placed on them by having sufficient skills to balance these demands. If the demands placed on the educator exceed the skills, he/she has to balance these demands. If not, a state of dissonance occurs in the mind of the educator. The school management team needs to be able to assist the educator by assisting them to cope with, for example, unrealistic time schedules and vast responsibility issues emanating from teaching (Loock, Grobler & Mestry, 2006:5).

2.2 THE CAUSES OF STRESS

As in any other occupation, whether an educator is employed in a primary or secondary school, private or public school, stress is perceived as being part of his or her daily work environment. Teaching is perceived to be amongst the highest stressful occupations world-wide (Kyriacou, 2001; Ryan et al., 2017:2).

Generally, stress is perceived to be caused by external factors such as workload and internal factors such as personal characteristics which may include personal attitude, self-awareness, self-discipline and emotional competence (Akhondi, Pourshafei & Asgari, 2017:13-14).

Educators are constantly under stress due to several aspects including the lack of parental involvement, negative educator attitudes, negative attitudes and poor discipline among learners and other stakeholders which are not effectively dealt with in the training and professional development of educators (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). It was also found that the fulfilment of several demanding roles, managing difficult interactions with parents and learners and poor professional relationships in addition to the above aspects also contribute to the stress levels of educators (Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienuis, 2008; Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010). In schools, particularly, pressure is experienced from excessive administrative duties, lack of professional training, and perceived poor salaries (Ryan et al., 2017:3). Demands on employees such as working overtime, work overload or higher expectations from the public and employers in general are also greater than ever before (Rothmann, 2003:17; Ryan et al., 2017:3). Some of the greatest pressures on educators are the heavy workload and the demands from the ever increasing curricula content (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009:1). The impact of these stressors vary from educator to educator, but all may eventually lead to burnout if not effectively managed (Ryan et al., 2017:3). Such internal and external pressure leads to stress becoming “the disease of our time” (Oliver & Venter, 2003:17). Stress will always be part of our lives and cannot be avoided, but if not managed properly can have debilitating effects.

In the workplace stress often starts off with responsibilities that are assigned to persons without providing the necessary authority to execute such responsibilities (Raza, Ansari & Aziz, 2017:702). Managing stress will depend on each individual educator. People who have good self-efficacy and are assertive generally experience less stress than those who cannot represent their own interests. Those who have a low self-efficacy or self-esteem and are unassertive generally fall under the control of those who exercise control and those who are subjected to this control inevitably have elevated stress levels (Friedman et al., 2003:42).

A third of educators consider their work to be mentally stressful (Borg, 1990). Social interaction with various stakeholders such as learners, parents and colleagues are part of a large portion of the work day for educators. Educators now have to control not only their own emotional behaviours, but also respond to those of the learners, parents and their colleagues (Akhondi et al., 2017). Educators need to be emotionally and socially competent in their occupation, they need to be self-aware, socially aware, know how to manage their emotions and have good decision-making skills (Johnson, 2018:27). It is also of importance for educators to have the ability to cope with change. Due to the fact that job satisfaction and stress can have economic and personal implications for educators, the factors that influence educator job satisfaction should be identified (Darmony & Smyth, 2011). Many educators thus go to school with many of the same life stressors which most adults face and they should learn how to manage them in order to create an effective environment and be emotionally responsive to learners and maintain relationships with all parties in the school.

The environment of a school plays an important role in the daily routines, not only for learners and how they learn, but also for educators and how they teach and work on a daily basis. Research has shown job satisfaction in schools is also influenced by working conditions (Darmody & Smyth, 2011). Discipline in classrooms plays a big role in educator stress; disciplined classes lower the stress levels of the educator. Educators are also less stressed when learners seem happier in the classroom. Even though discipline plays a role in their stress levels, classroom sizes tend to have little impact on the educator's stress levels (Darmody & Smyth, 2011). According to Ryan et al. (2017:4) less stress is experienced in schools where there is a positive environment than in schools with a negative environment. This environment also includes the relationship between educator-learners and educator-parents. The school climate thus is seen as a vital part of the job satisfaction and stress (Darmody & Smyth, 2011).

2.3 IMPACT OF STRESS ON EDUCATORS

All people react to stress in their own ways (Botha, 2013:83). Stress and conflict sometimes go hand in hand and this can be dangerous in situations where the conflict drags on for too long or when "personal glory" becomes a factor (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2012:200). Excess stress levels in the workplace can be connected to employee

dissatisfaction, depression, absenteeism, and general health issues, which are connected to diseases such as severe depression with devastating consequences (Friedman, Tidd, Curall & Tsai, 2003:40). Stress can both motivate or lead to teacher burnout (Ansley, 2018:1). The ailments associated with excessive stress have become a common and costly problem. Mishra and Inda (2014:72) point out that absenteeism, irrespective of the reason, has a negative impact on both the school as employer and the educator as employee. The educator may lose income and the school may lose quality teaching to the learners and sometimes even incur additional costs due to the employment of a temporary educator. Furthermore, the management of incapacitated employees has a direct impact on the school managers as they perceive it as a balancing act. On the one side the school managers must meet the teaching needs of the school, while on the other hand the school manager must take care of the affected educator's needs, for example, by providing teaching adaptations or re-assigning of teaching duties. In addition, the school manager experiences additional stress as he or she needs to balance the reactions of the co-educators in relation to the accommodations provided for the co-educator with a long-term health condition (Bramwell, Sanders & Rogers, 2016).

One great problem of dissatisfied educators is that they tend to leave the schools they perceive as causing their dissatisfaction. Some leave schools for other occupations, resulting in a permanent loss to the profession, while others move from one school to another in search of satisfying working conditions (Ryan et al., 2017:3). The departure from the profession is actually devastating in a country where education is of paramount importance so as to create the necessary skills set for the economy. Similarly, the moving from one school to another may also have a negative impact on the schools that are left behind.

Stress occurs naturally and can be seen in a person's emotional, physical or mental responses to stressful demands. Botha (2013:83) states that stress can be healthy or unhealthy, and the latter can cause emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment. This may manifest either at school level, in their personal lives or in both.

2.3.1 In the classroom

Educators are more and more physically and emotionally exhausted. Even though some claim that weekends are long enough to recover, others claim they cannot keep up with the pace. This clearly has an impact on their effectiveness in the classroom as such, as stressed educators tend to reduce the time they usually need to prepare for lessons using the hours to recover or rest (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015:189). Where stress starts to interfere with their emotional and physical well-being, the relationship that educators have with students starts to suffer (Herman, 2017:91).

Educators who are motivated and enjoy teaching have a smaller chance of burnout. These educators teach in a more motivating way and therefore have a more positive classroom environment. Educators who are not motivated tend to feel burned out and the complete opposite then occur in the classroom (Abós, Haerens, Sevil, Aelterman & Garcia-González, 2008). Educators who experience less stress are able to create a class with higher levels of learner engagement due to the enthusiasm with which they teach (Parkarinen, Kiuru, Lerkkanen, Poikkeus, Silkkinen & Nurmi, 2010).

2.3.2 In their personal lives

One of the main factors that influences teacher well-being is teaching related stress (Aflakseir, 2018). Although research has been done on several topics regarding stress, the personal factors of the teacher have received less attention (Abós et al., 2018).

All the pressure experienced in the workplace may result in several physical and mental problems for the affected educator, such as cardiovascular disease, depression, irritation and exhaustion. These symptoms can cause dysfunctionalities in relationships not only with husbands or wives, but also with family and friends (Nicholis, 2008). This occurs regularly where no support is given from either work or families (Hammer, Saksvik, Nytro, Torvatn & Bayazit, 2004:83).

Stress may lead to burnout, which is also a global concern (Jackson et al., 2006:263). This burnout is often due to work overload, lack of control over work, insufficient rewards, the breakdown of community engagement, absence of a system of fair procedures and

value conflict (Rothmann, 2003:20). Educators seems to experience chronic stress due to the constant stressors over a period of time and this does not just lead to burnout as mentioned above, but it can also cause negativity, emotional exhaustion and depression. This again has a direct impact on the learners in the classroom as educator-learner interactions are affected (Steinhardt, Smith, Faulk& Gloria, 2010)

It seems that the mental health of educators is declining and that early career educators are amongst the largest proportion of educators experiencing mental problems. Educators need to find a way of renewal to strengthen their connection to the profession (Darwich, 2018). This phenomenon of a declining state of mental health is not unique to educators; it is a global problem. It was found that in the United Kingdom mental health problems are one of the top two conditions contributing to the loss of productive time due to absence from work (Quazi, 2013:37-38). It was also found that longer-term absence (of more than four weeks), which accounts for 40% or more of working time lost in the United Kingdom, tends to include inter alia mental health issues (Black & Frost, 2011:45). In the United Kingdom mental health problems are also on the rise among academics in the higher education system (Shaw & Ward, 2014). The Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) found that 48,2% of sick absence was for periods of longer than 20 days, with higher education academic employees recording the highest levels of long-term sickness (Universities and Colleges Employers Association, 2014:12). According to the survey the major cause of sick absence was psychiatric illnesses (anxiety, stress, depression, and other psychiatric illnesses) (Universities and Colleges Employers Association, 2014:14). It was also found in Australia that 7,8% of the work force are depressed (Tooma & Beach, 2016:497-498).

The perceived stress by teachers differs from educator to educator as different factors such as age, education, experience and gender may play a role in how stress is experienced (Bolton, 2018). Emotional exhaustion, for example, tends to be lower in older educators as they seem to experience greater personal accomplishment (Brunsting, Sreckovic & Lane, 2014).

2.4 MANAGEMENT OF STRESS BY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS

Not all members in the school management teams have the knowledge of what is involved in teaching and learning in all subjects and therefore may not demonstrate the caring and empathy needed to fully understand the educators' stance toward teaching and learning. They may, for example, lack awareness of certain aspects of the curriculum and other aspects needed in the daily school routine. There is sometimes no effective system in place with respect to the monitoring and evaluation of actual learning and the teaching associated with it (Bush et al., 2009:7). Certain schools do in fact have systems that are effective, where educators are inspired and motivated by the development and implementation of a working plan. Successful school management teams must create this environment for educators.

Effective evaluation, monitoring classrooms, observations and engagement with parents and communities must be developed and implemented to promote learner achievements (Bush et al., 2009:7). There is a tendency to leave stress coping strategies to individuals or, even worse, the role of school management teams in helping staff with such strategies is often neglected (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2012:229). Educators perceive that the demands in their profession cause a heavy workload resulting in demotivation among educators. As such educators feel that additional training should be provided in dealing with these demands (Bush et al., 2009). Stress management should in fact also be part of educators' training and everyday routine; this should be included in the operational planning of schools (Botha, 2013:88). Educators undergoing training in professional development are proved to be more confident in their teaching and these educators tend to have a higher rate of job satisfaction (Ma & Mac-Millan, 1999). It is thus imperative that school management teams should create opportunities for educators to enhance their work, emotional and social learning skills to assist them in coping with work and personal stress. To do so the school management teams should build emotional awareness among educators, have clear expectation and objectives, be aware of cultural differences and recognise the need for self-care and so reduce personal stress (Johnson, 2018:27). Social awareness is recognising emotions in others or the ability to know how another feels. In this regard Goleman (1996:96) writes that empathy is a vital attribute needed to manage the emotions in others.

School management teams should set clear and realistic expectations of educators, as this will help them in managing their tasks and will decrease stress levels (Rothmann, 2003:191). The effective and efficient management of stress and addressing the needs of educators can have a positive impact on the education process as it creates a caring culture, improves peer support, decrease work pressure, creates feelings of personal accomplishment and improves the educator's job satisfaction (Vaughan, 2013:12). The perceived stress of educators is found to be directly affected by job satisfaction (Bolton, 2018). Educator support can thus lead to increased learner success (Johnson, 2018:27).

Good relationships between colleagues and cooperation can lead to an organisational motivational culture which establishes organisational excellence (Marques, 2006). Even though educator-colleague relationships are important, educators are encouraged to remember that the educators who they associate with is connected to the kind of educator they will become. Unhappy and disgruntled educators should be avoided to avoid spreading that type of mood or environment to other educators. Building a healthy school community with peers is thus very important (Darwich, 2018).

Schools should have a clear and joint vision in order to create alignment among individuals. School management teams can create an environment with a feeling of purpose. Educators' stress can be lowered by the school management team showing appreciation of educators (Akhondi et al., 2017:24). According to Griffith, Steptoe and Cropley (1999) stress can be reduced by increasing social support in the workplace. Good communication and a feeling of togetherness in a school environment increases job satisfaction better than in those with an environment that promotes loneliness and individualization (Ma & Mac-Millan, 1999). A positive school climate should thus be promoted and be a fundamental part of school development planning (Darmody & Smyth, 2011). Job satisfaction and occupational stress are, however, complex. Educators can be satisfied with their jobs even though their jobs are stressful (Darmody & Smyth, 2011).

Good leaders, in this case the principal together with the school management team, should have a clear system in place known to all stakeholders that provides for the management of teaching and learning, support of educators including communication with parents and the community to improve the context of learner achievement. Good

school management teams are those that can motivate and inspire educators and so raise the standards. (Bush, Joubert, Kiggunu & Van Rooyen, 2009).

2.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter 2 gives a review of the literature involving the causes of stress among educators, the effect it has on them and the management of stress by school management teams. In chapter 3 the research design and methodology adopted in this study are presented. The chapter explains how this study was approached, who was included in the sample and the number of participants. It states how the findings were analysed and how validity and reliability were ensured. It also states some limitations to the study and establishes ethical assurance.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in chapter 1, the general purpose of the study was to assist school management teams to realise what factors cause the stress of educators, how they are affected by this phenomenon and to show associations or relationships between the management by school management teams and the stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The central research question refers to the extent to which educators believe that school management teams know the causes of stress and how to manage it in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The sub-questions focus on the factors causing the stress of educators, how they are affected by the stress and the association or relationship between the management by school management teams and stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

In this chapter the research methodology and design adopted for this study are presented. The researcher also describes the research procedure, such as the sampling approach employed, the data collection method undertaken and the techniques applied for data analysis. The chapter is concluded with a discussion of the strategies applied to ensure trustworthiness, potential limitations and the ethical assurances.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a set of guidelines and instructions or plan (road map) to be followed by the researcher in addressing the research problem through the collection and analysing of data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:6, 28; Mouton, 1996:107; Rossman & Rallis, 2012:135). Two major research approaches exist, namely quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative research approach emphasises objectivity in studying a phenomenon. The quantitative research objectivity is maximised by applying mostly numerical data and statistics. In contrast, a qualitative research approach does not test hypotheses based on predetermined theoretical frameworks and, according to this approach, researchers cannot control aspects of the world that they are exploring.

With qualitative research, data is collected from participants based on their perceptions and understanding of the personal experiences in their natural environment, using in-person or observation methods (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:4-5, 14, 29; Rossman & Rallis, 2012:6-7).

For this study a quantitative, descriptive method was used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:19-20, 69, 73). The literature was reviewed to conceptualise the causes of stress amongst these educators, the influence of this phenomenon on them and the influence of the school management team's management of stress amongst these educators. The literature review was presented in chapter 2. In the empirical phase participants were selected, questionnaires were distributed, analysis was done on the data obtained from the respondents, data was reported and recommendations were made. The research design and methodology is discussed in this chapter (chapter 3) and the data analysis and research findings are presented in chapters 4 and 5 respectively. The necessary ethical clearance was obtained as required from the ethical committee of the College of Education, University of South Africa.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A researcher needs to clearly define the target population. A population is a group of elements or cases, that conform to specific criteria and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:142). Usually, the population is too large to survey all the members, therefore a sample should be selected from the population to represent the population.

According to the Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, "sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population" (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, 2018). Sampling methods are classified as either probability (statistical) or non-probability (non-statistical). Probability sampling is scientific, and every member of the population stands an equal chance of being selected. It includes random sampling, systematic sampling and stratified sampling. In non-probability sampling, participants are selected from the population in some non-random or subjective manner based on accessibility. Convenience sampling, judgment sampling,

quota sampling, snowball sampling, and purposive sampling are examples of non-probability sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014, 143-154).

As the research population was limited to educators at private primary schools in the Tshwane South District, Gauteng Province, purposeful sampling was chosen. The identified participants would have in-depth knowledge and understanding of the research phenomenon and could purposefully contribute to the purpose of the study, ensuring that a variety of voices is represented (Creswell, 1998, p. 110, Creswell, 2007, p.25; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014, p. 152; Myers & Newman, 2007, p. 22).

The population of this research included grade 1 to grade 7 educators of private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. There are 67 private primary schools in the Tshwane South District and the number of educators in these schools was used to establish the estimated research sample. In the case where the educator count of a private primary school in the Tshwane South District was unavailable, a minimum of seven educators was added to the population for each school, as each school has classes from grade one to seven, calculating on one educator for each grade. The estimated population of educators at private primary schools in the Tshwane South District, based on the actual educator count and the assumption of at least seven educators (one per grade) where the count was unknown, came to 612 educators. Working on a margin error of 5% and confidence level of 95% a response of estimated 237 participants or more was needed to have an effective analysis of data (raosoft.com/samplesize.html 2018). Data was eventually collected from 239 educators from private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

Primary school teachers of any other private primary school from the other districts of Tshwane South District, and all public schools within Tshwane, Gauteng Province were excluded from the population and sampling.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

When considering the different methods of data collection used when researching people, the survey method is considered the most appropriate for this type of research.

Through a survey, the data is collected from the sample population either through an interview or a questionnaire (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:30-31; Robson, 2011:235). It was decided to use a questionnaire. The survey method, through the use of a questionnaire, has its limitations but also has benefits. The limitations are related to the willingness of respondents to make time available to respond or a question might not be understood properly as it may not be clear. On the other hand, more respondents can be reached, and it is more cost-effective than interviews.

A questionnaire was developed to determine the views of grade one to grade 7 educators at private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The questionnaire intended to assist in determining the views, opinions and perceptions of the stress educators experience at private primary schools in the private primary schools in the Tshwane South District, the impact of the stress and the role that school management teams play in managing the educators' stress.

The structured questionnaire was developed with the intention to directly address the research problem and the research questions. The questionnaire consisted of 45 questions, grouped into five main sections, aligned to the research problem and the research questions presented in Table 3.1 (see attached as Appendix A).

Table 3.1: Grouping of questionnaire questions (own compilation)

Section	Description	Question number
Section A	Biographic information	A1 - A7
Section B	Adverse stressful experience	B1 - B5
Section C	Aspects causing stress	C1 - C13
Section D	Impact of stress	D1 - D9
Section E	Influence of school management teams	E1 - E11

The majority of questions were asked as a positive statement where respondents had to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement. An important part of a research questionnaire is the scale used to measure the responses of respondents. A Likert scale was used in the questionnaire as it can be used to obtain a participant's self-response or self-report data. The Likert scale is the most frequently used variation of the interval scale

that consists of statements that express either a favourable or an unfavourable attitude toward the object of interest. The Likert scale provides great flexibility because the descriptors on the scale can vary to fit the nature of the question or statement (McLeod, 2008; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:4). In this study the Likert scale was used giving the participants a five-point option to express their extent of agreement or disagreement with a particular statement. In this research a Likert-type scale served as the dependent or outcome variables. A web-based questionnaire was created on Microsoft Forms to make the distribution process easier.

In anticipation to reach the 237 participants, initially 32 private primary schools in the Tshwane South District were contacted to request the participation of their educators in completing the questionnaire. Two principals responded, granting permission for staff to participate in the study. The principals were asked to forward the link of the online questionnaire to their educators. The expected number of responses was not acquired, so another 26 private primary schools in the Tshwane South District were mailed with the online link with a request for participation in the study. It is unclear, however, whether principals did forward the link to their educators without responding on the emails. The questionnaire was also uploaded on social media (Facebook) on seven educational and teacher groups so as to reach the educators from the other private primary schools in the Tshwane South District that were not approached. Eventually 239 responses were received.

The questionnaire was also accompanied by a participant invitation letter that spelled out the aim of the study, confirming the anonymity of the participant, the rights of the participant and the confidentially of the data collected (Appendix B).

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

To explore the data, descriptive statistics was used first. This included calculating the means, medians, standard deviations and exploring the data for normal distribution of data. A statistical analysis programme (SPSS 26.0) was used to further analyse the data in search of factors involved in educator stress and possible associations between these factors and the independent variables in the study. Chapter 4 provides the detailed data analysis.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity in a quantitative study refers to the extent to which a phenomenon is accurately measured or the scientific explanation of the phenomenon matches reality. There are four types of validity in quantitative research, namely statistical conclusion (the correctness of the statistical analysis), internal (the viability of casual links between the independent and dependent variables), external (the ability to generalise the findings) and construct (can the researcher draw inferences about test scores related to the phenomenon being studied) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:116-129).

Reliability relates to the consistency of a measure, the extent to which the results are approximately the same each time a participant completes the same instrument (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:195).

Pretesting of the questionnaire to ensure face and content validity was performed. Seven colleagues of the researcher, one each per grade from grade 1 to 7, were requested to complete the questionnaire. They were requested to provide comments on the clarity of questions, the structure of the questionnaire and the logical flow of the questions. The questionnaire was subsequently amended to incorporate the comments deemed relevant. Once the questionnaire was finalised a further group of seven educators were identified to pre-test the questionnaire. The group was also requested to indicate how long it took to complete the questionnaire and to express views on the clarity of questions, the structure of the questionnaire and the logical flow of the questions.

Cronbach's alpha is the most commonly used test to determine the internal consistency of an instrument. The Cronbach's alpha result is a number between 0 and 1. An acceptable reliability score is one that is 0.7 and higher; a 0.8 and higher score is viewed as good and 0.9 and higher excellent.

The Cronbach alpha for section B of the questionnaire (combined value for questions B1-B5) was 0.79, for section C (combined value for questions C1-C13) was 0.85, for section D (combined value for questions D1-D9) was 0.89, and for section E (combined value for questions E1-E11) was 0.88. The combined Cronbach alpha values for all

sections of the questionnaire were above 0.70. The scales used with the sample were thus deemed to be internally reliable.

3.7 LIMITATIONS

The following limitations of the study were acknowledged:

- Only one method of data collection (questionnaire) was used.
- Not all educators in the Tshwane South District region participated. The study was limited to private primary school educators only, excluding secondary and public school, both primary and secondary school, educators.
- The study presents a snap-shot description of the selected participants' lived experience at a specific point in time, which may differ at another point in time such as being employed at another school or working under a different school management team.

3.8 ETHICAL ASSURANCES

Section 12(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996), stipulates that everyone has the right to bodily and psychological integrity, which includes, inter alia, the right not to be subjected to medical or scientific experiments without their informed consent (Republic of South Africa, 1996, section 12(2)(a)). Chapter 9 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 (Republic of South Africa, 2003) provides for the statutory governance of health research. The Act defines in section 1 that health research may be understood to include, but is not limited to, research that contributes to knowledge of, inter alia, the biological, clinical, psychological, or social processes in human beings. The research on stress falls within this definition as it investigates the social welfare of participants at primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

The Guidelines on Ethics in Research (Republic of South Africa, 2015a) guides ethical research. These guidelines are based on the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) and the National Health Act 61 of 2003 (Republic of South Africa, 2003). The guidelines provide for a broad and narrow meaning of health research. In the broad sense it refers to research conducted outside a health care environment, usually not with patients (Republic of South Africa, 2015a:7). This study fell

within this broad definition as the research was undertaken at private primary school level.

The guidelines on Ethics in Research (Republic of South Africa, 2015) and the ethical guidelines and standards stipulated by the University of South Africa were adhered to. The study was guided by the following ethical and moral principles:

- The autonomy, rights and dignity of participants were respected (Republic of South Africa, 2015:15; University of South Africa, 2014:10).
- The study aimed to make a positive contribution towards the wellness of educators (Republic of South Africa, 2015:14; University of South Africa, 2014:10).
- To the best of this researcher's knowledge the research did not cause harm to any participant (University of South Africa, 2014:10).

In addition to the above moral principles the study complies with the following general ethics principles (Republic of South Africa, 2015:15-17; University of South Africa, 2014:10-15):

- The research is essential and relevant in that it provides knowledge about perceived stress at private primary schools for the good of educators, the schools, and the public.
- The results and implication(s) of the research will be made public at an appropriate manner and time.
- The dignity, privacy and confidentiality of the participants and the private primary schools were respected and protected. This was achieved by anonymous responses to the questionnaire. No participant was requested to supply any information that compromised his or her confidentiality (Robson, 2011:200-204; Rossman & Rallis, 2012:73; Travis, 2017:1).
- The participants participated freely based on informed consent. Prior to responding to the questionnaire, the participants were informed of the purpose and the objectives of the study, and what their participation would entail to allow them to make a conscious and deliberate decision on whether to participate or not. They were informed that the participation was voluntary and that they should not feel coerced or unduly pressurised to participate. Participants were allowed to ask

questions and had the right to withdraw from the study at any time (Rossman & Rallis, 2012:74).

I received ethical clearance for this study from the College of Education Ethics Review Committee, University of South Africa (Ref: 2019/04/17/49232932/07/MC).

3.9 CONCLUSION

In chapter 3 the research methodology and design for this study were presented. Chapter 4 presents the analysis and interpretation of the results in this study which were derived the data collected from the questionnaire completed by the participants.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 focused on the research design and methodology followed. The aim of the study was to find the causes and effects of stress on educators and the management thereof in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. Chapter 4 presents the analysis and interpretation of the results of the study. The analysis was based on the data collected from the questionnaires completed by the 239 participants.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Statistics are used to organise and analyse quantitative data. There are two general types of statistical approaches: inferential and descriptive. Descriptive statistics are sets of numbers or observations that are transformed into indices that describe and summarise the data. Descriptive statistics enable the researcher to present the data in a more meaningful way through numerical calculations, graphs or tables, which allow simpler interpretation of the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:163). The most pertinent results are discussed in detail below and, where relevant, are presented in tabular and graphic format.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF SECTION A OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A of the questionnaire contained seven questions relating to biographical information of the participants.

4.3.1 Gender (A1)

The gender profile of the participants is summarised in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Gender groups in the sample

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	56	23.4	23.4	23.4
Female	183	76.6	76.6	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

According to the EMIS document there were 6840 female and 2284 male educators inclusive of the 101 independent schools in the Tshwane South District in 2016. This gives a ratio of 2.99 females to every male educator in the independent schools in Tshwane South in both primary and secondary schools in this District. The ratio of female to male educators in this sample was 3.27 females for every male educator. As one would expect the ratio of females to males to be higher in primary schools, this ratio of 3.27 females to every male educator who responded could thus be said to be representative of the population of the Tshwane South District educators with respect to gender.

4.3.2 Age group in years (A2)

Table 4.2 reflects the age distribution of the participants.

Table 4.2: Respondent'' age groups

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-29yrs	103	43.1	43.1	43.1
30-39yrs	65	27.2	27.2	70.3
40-49yrs	35	14.6	14.6	84.9
59-59yrs	30	12.6	12.6	97.5
60yrs	6	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

The data in Table 4.2 indicates that the majority of respondents were from the 20 to 29-year age group. The average age of the respondents was between 30 to 35 years of age.

4.3.3 Phase currently working in (A3)

The study only focussed on private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. Table 4.3 provides a summary of the phase the educators teach.

Table 4.3: Phase groups the respondents work in

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Foundation (Grades 1-3)	99	41.4	41.4	41.4
Intermediate (Grades 4-6)	94	39.3	39.3	80.8
Senior (Grade 7)	46	19.2	19.2	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

The data in Table 4.3 show that the majority of the respondents indicated that they presently worked in Grades 1 to 3 (41.4%), closely followed by respondents who worked with Grades 4 to 6 while only 19.2% respondents worked in Grade 7.

4.3.4 Home Language (A4)

Table 4.4: Home language of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
English	104	43.5	43.5	43.5
Afrikaans	116	48.5	48.5	92.1
Zulu	12	5.0	5.0	97.1
Xhosa	2	.8	.8	97.9
Other	5	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

The data in Table 4.4 indicates that the majority of respondents claimed Afrikaans to be their home language (48.5%) while 43.5% claimed it to be English. Only 7.9% of respondents claimed to have Zulu, Xhosa or other as home language. This is possibly representative of English and Afrikaans home language groups with respect to private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

4.3.5 Number of years of experience as an educator (A5)

Table 4.5 represents the years of service as an educator.

Table 4.5: Years of experience of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-1yrs	14	5.9	5.9	5.9
2-3yrs	60	25.1	25.1	31.0
4-6yrs	46	19.2	19.2	50.2
7-9yrs	34	14.2	14.2	64.4
10+yrs	85	35.6	35.6	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

The data in Table 4.5 shows that 31.0% of respondents had between one and three years of teaching experience and as such were relatively inexperienced. There were 35.6% of respondents who could be said to be relatively experienced with ten or more years of teaching experience.

4.3.6 Number of years in current school (A6)

The number of years that the educators have spent at their current school is reflected in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Number of years spent at current school (A6)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-1yr	54	22.6	22.6	22.6
2-3yrs	84	35.1	35.1	57.7
4-6yrs	39	16.3	16.3	74.1
7-9yrs	30	12.6	12.6	86.6
10+yrs	32	13.4	13.4	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

The data in the table above shows that 57.7% of respondents had been with their present school for between one and three years. There were 28.9% who indicated that they had been with the current school for between four to nine years while 13.4% indicated ten or more years at the current school.

4.3.7 Highest educational qualification achieved (A7)

The last question of Section A of the questionnaire dealt with the level of educational qualification.

Table 4.7: Highest educational qualifications of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
None	17	7.1	7.1	7.1
Bachelor's degree	93	38.9	38.9	46.0
Diploma	25	10.5	10.5	56.5
Post graduate certificate	23	9.6	9.6	66.1
Honour's degree	72	30.1	30.1	96.2
Master's degree	9	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	239	100.0	100.0	

The majority of the respondents claimed to have a bachelor's degree (38.9%) followed by an honour's degree (30.1%). The 7.1% who claimed they had no teaching qualification probably were still studying or in some group the questionnaire did not provide for.

Having presented a description of the bio-and demographic variables associated with the sample the statistical analysis of the data obtained will now be presented.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF SECTION B OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section B of the questionnaire contained five items which asked respondents how often they experienced certain aspects related to stressful situations in their private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The items were posed on a five-point interval scale where 1 represented rarely and 5 frequently. In an effort to find a more parsimonious solution to the five items the researcher made use of a factor analytic procedure (PCA with Varimax rotation). The initial Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) value of 0.761 with a Bartlett's sphericity probability value of $p = 0.000$ indicated that a solution with fewer variables was possible. One factor resulted which explained 54.24% of the variance present and had a Cronbach reliability of 0.79. It was named "frequency of adverse stressful experiences" (FB1.0) and the items in the factor are displayed in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Frequency of adverse stressful experiences factor (FB1.0)

FB1.0: Frequency of adverse stressful experiences (Cronbach = 0.79)			
Item	**Description: How often:**	**Loading**	**Mean**
B3	Have you considered leaving your school due to high levels of stress?	0.81	3.06
B5	Have you thought about leaving the teaching profession due to reasons that are stress related?	0.80	3.05
B4	Have you experienced high stress levels because of vast amount of paper work to be completed?	0.77	3.57
B2	Do you feel that you cannot keep up the pace of school activities?	0.71	3.51
B1	Are you as educator exposed to events which cause high levels of stress?	0.57	4.09
Average		0.73	3.46

The data distribution of the items in the factor are given in Figure 4.1

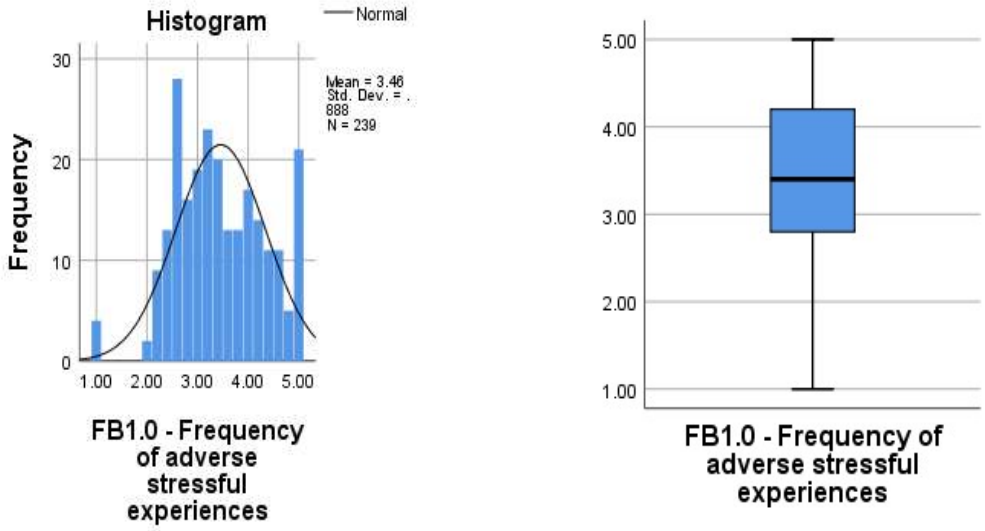

Figure 4.1: Data distribution in the frequency of adverse stressful experiences factor (FB1.0)

The mean score of 3.46 indicates that the majority of the respondents had the perception that they sometimes experienced adverse stressful situations as displayed by the items in the factor. The item with the highest factor loading (0.81) was item B3 (Have you considered leaving your school due to high levels of stress?). As such it is a good representation of what the factor represents (Field, 2018:784). This item explains 65.61%

of the variance present and hence makes a relatively large contribution to the factor. The item with the highest mean score (4.01) was item B1 (Are you as educator exposed to events which cause high levels of stress?) indicating that the respondents often experienced such events. The data distribution is slightly negatively skewed. This factor (FB1.0) is unidimensional and is made up of one underlying dimension related to the frequency of adverse stressful experiences that influence stress levels in primary school educators in the Tshwane South District.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF SECTION C OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section C of the questionnaire contained 13 items which asked respondents to what extent the stress experienced was due to certain aspects found in the education environment. The items were posed on a five-point interval scale where 1 was anchored by rarely and 5 were anchored by frequently. In order to reduce the 13 variables to a more parsimonious number, a factor analytic procedure was performed on the data provided by the respondents. The initial procedure (PAF with Oblimin rotation) indicated that items C3 and C13 should be removed due to low communalities and loading only on one factor. The procedure with items removed had a KMO of 0.836 and Bartlett's sphericity with a significant probability value of $p = 0.000$ indicating that a more frugal solution was possible. Three first-order factors resulted which explained 61.67% of the variance present. The first-order factors were:

- FC1.1 – Stress due to external factors with Alpha of 0.707
- FC1.2 – Stress due to administrative duties with Alpha of 0.764
- FC1.3 – Stress due to management issues with Alpha of 0.701

These three first-order factors were subjected to a second-order procedure and one factor resulted which explained 68.81% of the variance amongst the three factors. It had a Cronbach alpha of 0.846. The items in this factor, named "perceptions of aspects causing stress" (FC2.0), together with item loadings and mean scores are given in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Perceptions of aspects causing stress

FC2.0- Perceptions of aspects causing stress (Cronbach = 0.846)			
Item	**Description: Extent of stress experienced due to:**	**Loading**	**Mean**
C4	Continual changes to the teaching curriculum? (FC1.1)	0.71	3.07
C11	Lack of good learner discipline in classrooms? (FC1.1)	0.56	3.44
C8	More than 40 learners in classes (FC1.1)	0.54	2.10
C12	Lack of parental involvement in school activities? (FC1.1)	0.47	3.21
C1	Working more than the expected 40 hours per week? (FC1.2)	0.66	3.90
C5	Duties associated with continuous assessment? (FC1.2)	0.58	3.40
C7	Administration associated with your teaching duties? (FC1.2)	0.50	3.63
C10	No recognition from management for the work I do? (FC1.3)	0.76	3.31
C9	Lack of effective communication? (FC1.3)	0.52	3.75
C2	The uncertainty of your position or post at your school? (FC1.3)	0.40	2.52
C6	Limited teaching resources? (FC1.3)	0.40	2.82
Average			3.20

The data distribution of this factor is shown in Figure 4.2

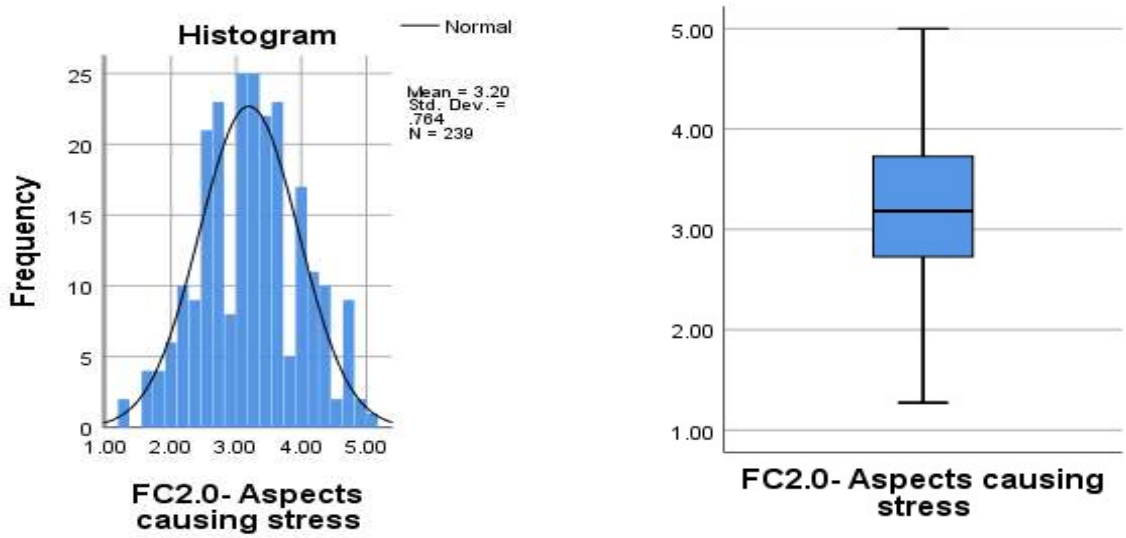

Figure 4.2: Data distribution in the factor perceptions of aspects causing stress (FC 2.0)

The mean score of the factor was 3.20 indicating that perceptions were that these aspects sometimes cause stress in the respondents in primary schools in the sample. The item with the highest mean score was item C1 (Working more than the expected 40 hours per week) and educators had the perception that this sometimes tended to be a cause of stress. Item C10 (No recognition from management for the work I do) had the highest factor loading as did the items belonging to FC1.3 (0.77 - second-order loading). As such items in this factor "stress due to management issues" (FC1.3) were most representative of this factor. In this sample of data, the multi-dimensional factor "perceptions of aspects causing stress" (FC2.0) is composed of three first-order factors or sub-dimensions (FC1.1; FC1.2 and FC1.3).

4.6 FACTOR ANALYSIS OF THE ITEMS IN SECTION D OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section D of the questionnaire contained nine items which contained statements about the possible outcomes of increased levels of stress on educators in private primary schools. The initial factor analytic procedure (PCA with Oblimin rotation) had a KMO of 0.843 and Bartlett's sphericity of p = 0.000, suggesting that a more parsimonious solution with fewer variables would be feasible. The two first-order factors were:

- FD1.1 – Reactions associated with increased stress levels with alpha of 0.866
- FD1.2 – Consequences of increased stress levels with alpha of 0.823

When subjecting these two first-order factors to a similar second-order procedure one factor resulted which explained 83.55% of the variance present. The Cronbach alpha value was 0.891. The factor loadings on the first-order factors and the mean scores of the items in the perceived outcomes of increased stress levels are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Perceived indicators of increased stress levels

FD2.0 - Perceived indicators of increased stress levels (Cronbach = 0891)			
Item	**Description: Extent of increased stress levels leading to:**	**Loading**	**Mean**
D6	Feelings of exhaustion? (FD1.1)	0.96	4.18
D4	Feelings of being overworked? (FD1.1)	0.77	3.91
D7	Feelings of irritation? (FD1.1)	0.77	3.97
D9	Feelings of burnout? (FD1.1)	0.72	3.78
D5	Being sloppy about your personal appearance? (FD1.2)	0.86	2.64
D2	Using more prescribed medicine? (FD1.2)	0.75	2.53
D8	Experiencing relationship problems between you and your spouse, friends or family? (FD1.2)	0.63	2.77
D1	Health problems requiring medical treatment? (FD1.2)	0.60	2.62
D3	Feelings of depression? (FD1.2)	0.51	3.09
Average			3.28

The distribution of the data in the factor (FD2.0) is shown in Figure 4.3

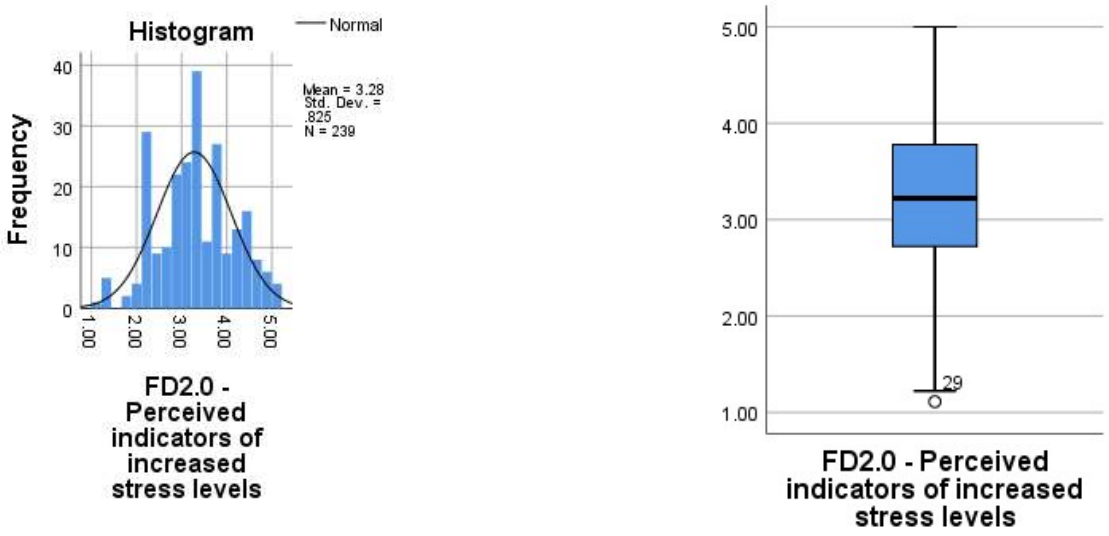

Figure 4.3: Data distribution in the factor perceived indicators of increased stress levels

The mean score of 3.28 with median of 3.22 suggests that the majority of respondents perceived the indicators as sometimes resulting from increased levels of stress. The item with the highest mean score was feelings of exhaustion (D6). This seems a logical outcome as any person who has taught for a full teaching day for a term's duration knows about such feelings of exhaustion both physically and mentally. This item also had the highest factor loading of 0.96 and hence explains 92.16% of the variance present. This is of substantive importance as a common public perception is that educators have too many holidays, as mostly they are unaware of the stress levels which educators are subjected to.

4.7 FACTOR ANALYSIS OF SECTION E OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section E of the questionnaire contained 11 items which probed perceptions of the influence of the school management teams on the management of stress levels among educators. The items were anchored by 1 which represented strongly disagree and 5 which stood for strongly agree with 3 being the neutral value. To obtain a more parsimonious solution to the 11 variables a PCA with Oblimin rotation was performed on the data. The initial analysis indicated that items E1 and E11 should be removed due to low communality values. The nine remaining items were then subjected to a PCA with Oblimin rotation as well as Varimax rotation. Both rotations gave the same factors namely two first-order factors which explained 65.29% of the variance present:

- FE1.1- Perceived influence of school management teams in controlling teaching and learning with Cronbach alpha of 0.818
- FE1.2- Perceived influence of school management teams in managing educator stress levels with Cronbach alpha of 0.848

When these two first-order factors were subjected to another factor analytic procedure, one second-order factor resulted. It was named 'Perceived influence of school management teams in managing teaching, learning and educator stress' (FE2.0). It had a Cronbach alpha of 0.881 and contained nine items. The items, their first-order factor loadings and mean scores are given in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Perceived influence of school management teams in managing teaching, learning and educator stress

FE2.0-Perceived influence of SMT to manage T&L and stress of educators (Cronbach = 0,881)			
Item	**Description**	**Loading**	**Mean**
E10	I give my full support to my SMT? (FET1.1)	0.84	3.64
E7	My SMT sets clear expectations regarding my role as educator? (FE1.1)	0.82	3.11
E9	My SMT has a caring attitude regarding the climate of teaching? (FE1.1)	0.74	3.08
E8	My SMT has a system in place for the effective monitoring of teaching and learning? (FE1.1)	0.74	3.05
E2	In my school, I have been exposed to training on how to manage stressful situations? (FE1.2)	0.92	2.33
E3	My SMT is actively involved in managing stress of educators? (FE1.2)	0.81	2.41
E4	My SMT supports me in improving my social and emotional skills? (FE1.2)	0.67	2.61
E6	My SMT motivates me towards achieving my personal goals? (FE1.2)	0.53	2.74
E5	My SMT recognises that educators come to school with many of the same external life stressors?(FE1.2)	0.48	2.75
Average			2.86

The data distribution of the items in the factor are given in Figure 4.4

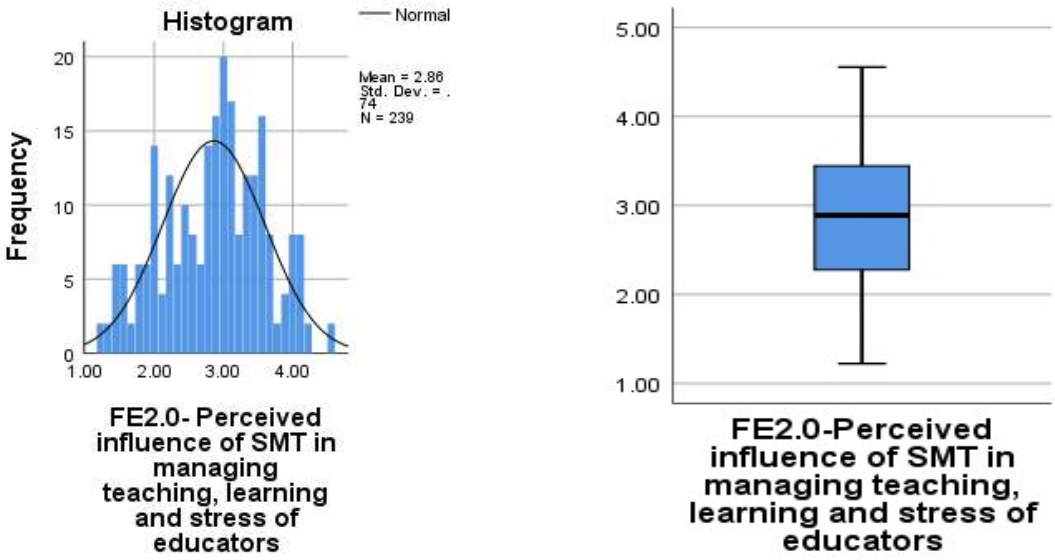

Figure 4.4: Data distribution in the factor perceived influence of the school management teams in managing teaching, learning and educator stress

The mean score of 2.86 with a median of 2.89 indicates that the majority of educators in the sample tend towards a neutral perception, namely that they neither disagree or agree with the school management teams having the perceived influence to meet the requirements in the statements. More specifically, the mean for the items belonging to FE1.1 (Perceived influence of the SMT in controlling teaching and learning) had a mean of 3.22 which indicates neutrality whilst the mean of FE1.2 was only 2.57 which indicates partial disagreement regarding the perceived influence on managing the stress levels of educators. The item with the highest mean score was Item E10 (I give my full support to my SMT) with a mean of 3.64 which seems to indicate a partial agreement with this item. Item E2 (In my school, I have been exposed to training on how to manage stressful situations) had the lowest mean score of 2.33 indicating disagreement with this item. Clearly the management of stressful situations needs to be given more attention by the school management teams. One could also conclude that respondents agree more strongly with the items in the school management teams influencing teaching and learning (FE1.1) than they do with managing the stress levels of educators (FE1.2) The two first-order factors seem to suggest a paradox in that, in a bureaucratic and hierarchical system, a typical management response to poor performance is that in order to improve perceptions of teaching and learning the control of teacher activities must

increase. However, this is likely to also increase the educators' perceived levels of stress experienced. This supports a dialectical view of change which asserts that this kind of paradox is inevitable (Morgan, 1997:293; Page, 2016). Morgan (1997) suggests that this reflects "the struggle of the opposites and the fact that any system development always contains elements of counter development, because each position tends to generate its opposite". Thus, the act of seeking more control over teaching and learning activities is likely to mobilise existing efforts of control, which in turn undermines the efforts of managing greater stress levels.

4.8 MULTIPLE REGRESSION MODEL

Multiple linear regression was utilised in an effort to see to what extent the postulated causes and consequences of stress (Sections B, C and D in the questionnaire) would be able to predict the perceived influence of school management teams on the management of such levels of stress. In equation form one could write:

Outcome variable (Y) = Constant + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 … b_nX_n + $Error_1$
Influence of SMT(FE2.0) = b_0 + b_1(Freq. of adverse exp.) + b_2(Aspects causing stress) + b_3(Indicators)

Hence this researcher used SPSS 26.0 to investigate the outcome (FE2.0) whilst using the first-order factors as obtained from the factor analytic procedures performed on Sections B, C and D of the questionnaire as indicators. The first part of the output is a correlation matrix of the various factors utilised as reflected in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Correlations between the outcome variable (FE2.0) and predictors utilised (FB1.0, FC1.1, FC1.2, FD1.2 and FD1.2)

		FE2.0	FB1.0	FC1.1	FC1.2	FC1.3	FD1.1	FD1.2
FE2.0 - Perceived influence of SMT	Pearson Correlation	1	-.181**	-.179**	-.213**	-.507**	-.225**	-.304**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005	.006	.001	.000	.000	.000

FB2.0 - Perceived influence of school management teams in managing teaching, learning and stress of educators
FB1.0 - Frequency of adverse stressful experiences
FC1.1 - Stress due to external aspects
FC1.2 - Stress due to administrative duties
FC1.3 - Stress due to management
FD1.1 - Reactions associated with increased stress levels
FD1.2 - Consequences of increased stress levels

The data in the correlation matrix indicates significant negative correlations between the outcome (perceived influence of school management teams) and all six of the first-order predictors utilised. There were no correlation coefficients close to 0.90 which possibly precludes the presence of multi-collinearity among the predictors (Field, 2018:409). The predictor with the highest negative correlation was "stress due to management" ($r = -0.507$; $p = 0.0005$). All of the predictors utilised thus have a negative correlation on the influence of the school management teams to manage stress levels. As all predictors were placed in the multiple regression model together, there was only one model which resulted and a summary of this model is given in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.485[a]	.235	.215	.71709	.235	11.894	6	232	.000	2.054

a. Predictors: (Constant), FD1.2 - Consequences of increased stress levels, FC1.1 - Stress due to external aspects, FC1.2- Stress due to administrative duties, FC1.3- Stress due to management, FB1.0 - Frequency of adverse stressful experiences, FD1.1 - Reactions associated with increased stress levels

b. Dependent Variable: FE1.2 -Perceived influence of SMT in managing stress levels

The data in Table 4.13 shows the various parameters in the model. Of significance is the R^2 value between the predictors and the outcome and it shows that 23.5% of the outcome "perceived influence of the SMT in managing stress" is accounted for by the predictors. This could be seen as a moderate or medium effect size (Field, 2018:117). In addition,

the change in R^2 is significant ($p<05$). The F-test represents the ratio of improvement in the prediction that results from fitting the model, relative to the inaccuracy that still exists in the model when no predictors are used. The F-statistic is 11.89, p = 0.0005 for the model and hence the model significantly improves our ability to predict the outcome variable compared to not fitting the model (if one used only the mean of the perceived influence with no predictors added). The Durbin-Watson statistic was close to a value of 2.0 indicating that errors were independent of one another (Field, 2018:387). The ANOVA table is provided in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: The ANOVA table resulting from fitting the stress predictors to the outcome perceived influence of school management teams in managing stress levels

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	36.697	6	6.116	11.894	.000[b]
	Residual	119.298	232	.514		
	Total	155.995	238			

a. Dependent Variable: FE1.2 -Perceived influence of SMT in managing stress levels

b. Predictors: (Constant): FD1.2 - Consequences of increased stress levels, FC1.1 - Stress due to external aspects, FC1.2- Stress due to administrative duties, FC1.3- Stress due to management, FB1.0 - Frequency of adverse stressful experiences, FD1.1 - Reactions associated with increased stress levels

The ANOVA value again indicates that when all six predictors are utilised together there is a significant interaction but it does not indicate which of the six predictors have a significant influence on the perceived influence of the school management teams to manage stress levels of educators in primary schools in the Tshwane South District. Table 4.15 provides the various parameters in the model (the beta values in the equation given above).

Table 4.15: The model parameters when predicting the outcome variable FE2.0 from the six predictors dealing with levels of stress

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.473	.258		13.461	.000
	FB1.0 - Frequency of adverse stressful experiences	.118	.081	.130	1.463	.145
	FC1.1 - Stress due to external aspects	.136	.067	.155	2.033	.043
	FC1.2- Stress due to administrative duties	-.022	.082	-.024	-.267	.790
	FC1.3- Stress due to management	-.410	.067	-.470	-6.154	.000
	FD1.1 - Reactions associated with increased stress levels	.054	.095	.053	.567	.571
	FD1.2 - Consequences of increased stress levels	-.211	.070	-.255	-3.021	.003
a. Dependent Variable: FE1.2 -Perceived influence of SMT in managing stress levels						

The multiple regression equation, utilizing *only the values with statistical significance*, in Table 4.15 can be written as:

Influence of SMT = 3.473 + (0.136) (FC1.1) + (-0.02) (FC1.2) + (-0.410) (FC1.3) + (-0.211) (FD1.2) +Error.

This will give the predicted value of the influence of the school management teams and should one subtract the observed value then the error can be found.

If one considers the standardized Beta values, the factor making the largest significant prediction to the perceived influence of the school management teams in managing stress was (FC1.3 = -0.470 - stress due to management), followed by (FD1.2 = -0.25 - consequences of stress levels) and then stress due to external factors (FC1.1 = + 0.16). Hence two of the significant influences make a negative contribution towards the school management teams' influence on managing stress levels, namely stress due to management (FC1.3) and consequences due to increased stress levels (FD1.2). As the stress due to management increases so the ability of the school management teams to influence increased stress levels decreases. One could argue that the one is the mirror image of the other, as poor management of stress levels by the school management teams could also lead to greater consequences due to larger stress levels. The responsibility for managing stress levels lies with the school management teams and the principal is the main authority figure in this team. Being aware of external factors which influence levels of stress can also improve the influence of the school management teams in managing educator stress levels.

In a hierarchical and bureaucratic system, such as the education system, characterized by mandates to measure educator performance, it is highly likely that dialectical tensions will be present. Hence efforts to improve educator performance are likely to lead to increased levels of stress among educators which could lead to a negation of the attempt to improve educator performance in the first place. Managing such paradoxical situations is extremely difficult as one needs to manage both sides of the paradox, namely increased educator performance and the accompanying stress and its possible consequences.

So, in this research the school management teams can be seen as providing the driving forces in their attempts to manage increasing stress levels which are the resisting forces. Hence the school management teams should attempt to reduce the forces involved with increasing stress levels or attempt to develop strategies to assist educators to manage stress levels more effectively, requiring a dialectical approach whereby the interrelated tensions and contradictions of the educators' stress and the management thereof are viewed as interrelated, rather than attempting reifying educator performance or the management of stress by the school management teams (Page, 2016).

In an effort to simplify the number of factors to a more parsimonious solution the items involved in factor FB1.0, FC2.0 and FD2.0 were subjected to a factor analytic procedure using PCA with Oblimin rotation. This could be done as all items in the factors had an identical scale. The KMO value of 0.728 with Bartlett's sphericity probability value of p = 0.000 indicated that a more parsimonious solution was plausible. One factor resulted which was named "Pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators" (F-Inc.-S) and which explained 66.51% of the variance present. The data distribution of the items in this factor is given in Figure 4.5.

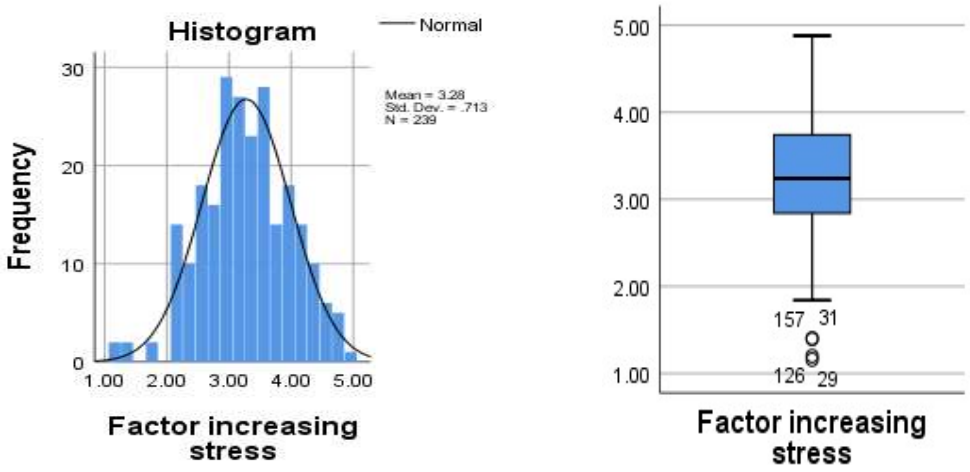

Figure 4.5: Data distribution in the factor pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators (F_Inc_S)

The mean score of 3.28 with median of 3.24 indicates that the educators in the sample had the perception that these items in the factor sometimes resulted in increased levels of stress. The 95% confidence intervals were LCI = 3.19 and UCI = 3.36. The population mean lies between 3.19 and 3.36 in 95% of the samples as the values do not cross zero. The Cronbach reliability coefficient was 0.919.

Having simplified the dependent variables to two factors namely "pivotal aspects involved with stress in primary school educators" (F_Inc_S) and "perceived influence of SMT in managing stress" (FE2.0), possible associations or relationships between these two factors as dependent variables and the independent variables in the sample will be investigated.

Firstly, it would be pertinent to investigate possible differences in the sample as a whole between all respondents with respect to the pivotal aspects involved with stress (F_Inc_S) and the perceived influence of the school management teams in managing stress. As all educators were involved in completing all the items one could use the paired t-test to see if significant differences were present. A summary of the paired t-test results was as follows:

$$[M_{F\_Inc\_S} = 3.28; \quad M_{FE2.0} = 2.86; \quad t(238) = 5.43; \quad p = 0.0005; \quad r = 0.33]$$

The respondents in the sample scored significantly higher on the pivotal aspects involved with stress than they did on the influence of the school management teams in managing stress. The effect size was moderate and the correlation r was -0.344. The respondents have the perception that the factors involved with stress levels are significantly larger than the influence of the school management teams to manage levels of stress. In this sample these two factors were inversely proportional to one another and as the one increases so the other factor decreases in size. The larger the management skills of the school management teams the lower the stress levels of the primary school educators in this sample and vice-versa.

4.9 INVESTIGATING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES IN THE SAMPLE

When investigating whether two independent groups differ statistically significantly from one another with respect to some dependent variable, one can make use of the independent t-test provided some parametric assumptions are met. This researcher has already ascertained the reliability and construct validity of the various dependent variables (factors) involved in this research.

4.9.1 Gender as independent variable

With respect to gender a possible null hypothesis for the pivotal aspects involved with stress could be:

Ho – There is statistically no significant difference between the gender groups with respect to their perceptions of the pivotal aspects factor (F_Inc_S)
Ha - There is statistically a significant difference between the gender groups with respect to their perceptions of the pivotal aspects factor (F_Inc_S)

Using the independent t-test the following results were obtained for male and female respondents with respect to the pivotal aspects factor:

$$[F\_Inc\_S - M_M = 3.11; M_F = 3.33; t(237) = -2.01; p = 0.04; r = 0.13]$$

The data indicates that female respondents had the perception that the pivotal aspects influencing stress levels occurred significantly more often (3.33) than male respondents (3.11) believed this. The effect size was small. However, the pivotal aspects factor is composed of three factors namely, FB1.1. FC2.0 and FD2.0. Tests at the multivariate level revealed that the differences in the pivotal aspects factor was founded in FB1.0 (Frequency of adverse experiences) and in FC2.0 (Perceptions of aspects causing stress). Regarding the frequency factor (FB1.0), results indicated the following:

$$[FB1.0 - M_M = 3.23; M_F = 3.53; F(1,237) = 4.75; p = 0.03; r = 0.14]$$

The result indicates that female respondents on average perceived the frequency of adverse stressful experiences as occurring statistically significantly more often than male respondents experienced it.

Regarding FC2.0 (Perceptions of aspects causing stress) the results were as follows:

$$[FC2.0 - M_M = 3.02; M_F = 3.25; F(1,237) = 4.06; p = 0.04; r = 0.13]$$

Regarding the dependent variable perceptions of aspects causing stress, female respondent had the highest mean score. Hence females perceived aspects which cause stress as occurring statistically significantly more often than males perceived it to be occurring in primary schools in the sample. However, the factor FC2.O is built on three underlying factors namely FC1.1 (Stress due to external aspects); FC1.2 (Stress due to administrative duties) and FC1.3 (Stress due to management). Multivariate tests on the

three first-order factors indicated that the difference was situated in FC1.1 (Stress due to external aspects). The results were as follows:

$[FC1.1 - M_M = 2.68; M_F = 3.04; F(1) = 6.56; p = 0.01; r = 0.16]$

Females had a statistically significantly higher perception of stress resulting from external aspects than males did. The effect size was small.

The factor relating to the influence of the school management teams to manage levels of stress (FE2.0) showed no statistically significant difference although male respondents had a slightly higher mean score (3.02) than female respondents had (2.81). This difference could possibly mean that males still predominate in the promotion posts and as such are likely to be members of the school management teams and biased self-perceptions probably play a role in this factor.

When investigating three or more independent groups one can utilise a one-way multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA)

4.9.2 Home language

The vast majority of respondents indicated either English or Afrikaans as home language whilst Zulu, Xhosa and 'other' contained small numbers and were grouped under 'other'. When testing the pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators (F-Inc.-S) together with the influence of the school management teams to manage stress levels (FE2.0), regarding their association with the three home language groups, use was made of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). If significant differences are found at this multivariate level, then one investigates these differences at the univariate level utilizing ANOVA followed by post-hoc tests such as Hochberg GT2 or other appropriate post-hoc tests. The MANOVA test for the three home language groups gave the following results, namely:

$[F\_Inc\_S - M_E = 3.08; M_A = 3.48; M_O = 3.09;\ FE2.0; M_E = 2.97; M_{Afr} = 2.77;\ M_O = 2.78; \wedge = 0.915; F(4,470) = 5.32; p = 0.000. r = 0.21$

The multivariate test utilised was Wilks Lambda (Λ) and its p-value was highly significant. This suggested that the home language groups differed from one another when the two factors were tested together. The Eigen vectors of the average values of the different groups were investigated. One can, for example, see that the respondents who claim Afrikaans as home language have the perception that they experience the pivotal aspects associated with increasing stress levels more often than do English and other home language groups. It is likely that the Afrikaans home language group differs significantly from the groups with the lowest scores but univariate tests should confirm this. With respect to the influence of the school management teams to manage stress all three groups partially disagreed but the English home language group disagreed less strongly with the factor. Any possible significant differences in the mean scores of the three home language groups will need to be investigated further at the univariate level.

The results of the univariate tests indicated the significant differences were present only in the pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators (F-Inc.-S), the results of the univariate ANOVA test was as follows:

$[Home\ Lang.(F\_Inc\_S)\ M_E = 3.08; M_A = 3.48; M_O = 3.09; F(2) = p = 0.0005; r = 0.28]$

The result of the univariate ANOVA test when the three home language groups were tested together were as follows:

$[F(2) = 10.26; p = 0.0005; r = 0.28]$

The ANOVA test indicates that the three home language groups differed statistically significantly from one another on the pivotal aspects of stress in primary school teachers ($p<0.05$) but not which of the home-language groups differ. To find this out a post-hoc pair-wise comparison was done. This researcher made use of the Hochberg GT2 test as the groups differed in size. The results of the Hochberg GT2 test were as follows:

$[F_{In\_S} - Eng.vs.Afr - M_E = 3.08; M_{Afr} = 3.48; p = 0.0005;$
$Afr.vs.Other - M_{Afr} = 3.48; M_{Othe} = 3.09; p = 0.020]$

The data shows that the respondents with Afrikaans as home language differed statistically significantly from respondents who had English and 'other' as home language. The Afrikaans home language group had the perception that the pivotal aspects causing stress occurred significantly more often than did the other two home language groups. We will now try to determine in which of the first-order factors this difference between home language groups is situated. As there are six first-order factors they all need to be utilised as dependent variables and hence MANOVA can be utilised as it tests the six factors together and if a significant difference is found at this level then further univariate tests can be utilised to determine in which first-order factor or factors these differences are situated.

The multivariate test utilised was the Wilks-Lambda test ($\wedge$) which tested the Eigen vectors of the means of the various groups with respect to six first-order factors of the pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators (F-Inc.-S) together. Any significant difference at this multivariate level is then further investigated by means of ANOVA. The results of the Wilks-Lambda test were:

$$\Lambda = 0.941; F(12{,}464) = 3.998; p = 0.0005; r = 0.31$$

As the multivariate test was significant ($p<0.05$) univariate analysis using ANOVA with Bonferroni correction was utilised. As there were five of the six first-order factors showing significant differences this researcher placed them in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Significance of differences between the three home language groups with respect to the factors forming pivotal aspects of stress in primary school teachers

Factor	Group	Mean score	F value	ANOVA (p-value)	Effect size (r)
FB1.1- Frequency of adverse stressful experiences	English	3.22	11.49	0.000***	0.300
	Afrikaans	3.73			
	Other	3.12			
FC1.1 - Stress due to external aspects	English	2.70	6.41	0.000***	0.251
	Afrikaans	3.19			
	Other	2.92			
FC1.3 - Stress due to management	English	2.82	7.47	0.000***	0.270
	Afrikaans	3.33			
	Other	3.26			
FD1.1 - Reactions associated with increased stress levels	English	3.89	3.25	0.04*	0.16
	Afrikaans	4.08			
	Other	3.65			
FD1.2 - Consequences of increased stress levels	English	2.51	6.94	0.001**	0.247
	Afrikaans	2.98			
	Other	2.42			

* Statistically significant at the 5% level ($p>0.01$ but $p<0.05$)

** Statistically significant at the 0.01% level ($p<0.005$)

*** Statistically significant at the 0.001% ($p<0.0005$)

The results thus indicate that perceptions of aspects increasing stress levels are associated with home language. It is likely that cultural differences and differing personalities also play a role in these differences. As effect size is a standardized value one can compare the effect sizes directly with one another. Hence the largest effect is present in FB1.1 (The frequency of adverse experiences). In this factor the respondents who had Afrikaans as home language perceived that they experienced stressful situations significantly more often than both the other home language groups. The next highest effect was for stress due to management (FC1.3) where Afrikaans home language respondents again had the highest score.

Next was stress due to external aspects (FC1.1) followed by consequences of stress levels (FD1.2). One could conclude that as far as pivotal aspects of stress in primary

school educators (F_Inc_S) is concerned, the Afrikaans home language group perceived these aspects occurring more often than did the English and 'other' home language groups. This was also true for the factors underlying the pivotal factor, namely the frequency of adverse experiences (FB1.0), the stress due to management (FC1.3), the stress due to external aspects (FC1.1) and the consequences of stress levels (FD1.2). All of these factors could be seen as forces that serve to increase stress levels in educators as opposed to the perceived level of the school management teams to manage these levels of stress. Hence the school management teams should attempt to reduce the size of factors involved in the frequency of adverse experiences (FB1.0), stress due to management (FC1.3), stress due to external aspects (FC1.3) as well as attempting to minimize the consequences of stress levels. Management skills such as learning how to manage paradoxical situations as well as carefully examining one's own predominant mental model could be possible strategies to overcome increasing stress levels. When school management teams take a particular stance of management they should make sure that they also inquire into the views and positions of others in their school. The school management teams need to ask themselves whether their actions are likely to increase the stress levels beyond a reasonable degree. Possibly they need to think outside of the traditional authoritarian dogma of the bureaucracy, namely managing, organizing and controlling and balancing the dichotomy between the educators' stress and the management thereof by school management teams.

4.9.3 Phase currently teaching in

There were three phases namely foundational (Grade 1-3), Intermediate (Grade 4-6) and Senior (Grade 7). When testing the pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators (F-Inc.-S) together with the influence of the school management teams to manage stress levels (FE2.0) regarding the three phases they are currently teaching in, use was made of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). If significant differences are found at this multivariate level, then one further investigates any differences at the univariate level utilizing ANOVA followed by post-hoc tests such as Hochberg GT3 or other appropriate post-hoc tests. The MANOVA test for the three home language groups gave the following results namely:

$[F\_Inc\_S - M_{G1-3} = 3.20; M_{G4-6} = 3.30; M_{G7} = 3.40;\ FE2.0; M_{G1-3} = 3.03; M_{G4-6} = 2.70;\ M_7 = 2.82; \wedge = 0.915; F(4,470) = 5.32; p = 0.000. r = 0.21$

The multivariate test utilised was Wilks Lambda and its p-value was highly significant. This suggested that the presently teaching grade groups differed from one another when the two factors were tested together. The Eigen vectors of the average values of the different groups were investigated. One can, for example, see that the respondents who teach Grade 7 have the perception that they experience the pivotal aspects associated with increasing stress levels more often than do respondents teaching the lower grades. With respect to the influence of the school management teams to manage stress, the respondents teaching in Grades 1 to 3 had the highest mean and were neutral in their perception about the influence of the school management teams in managing stress. Any possible significant differences in the mean scores of the three phases taught will need to be investigated further at the univariate level. Use of ANOVA at the univariate level gave the results as given in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Significance of differences between the three presently taught grade groups with respect to the pivotal factor aspects of stress in primary school teachers and the influence of the school management teams on manage stress levels

Factor	Group	Mean score	F value	ANOVA (p-value)	Effect size (r)
F_Inc_S – Pivotal aspects of stress in primary school teachers	G1-3	3.20	1.223	0.296	0.10
	G4-6	3.29			
	G7	3.39			
FE2.0 –The influence of the SMT to manage stress	G1-3	3.03	5.275	0.006**	0.21
	G4-6	2.70			
	G7	3.39			

** Statistically significant at the 1% level (p<0.01)

From the data in Table 4.17 it can be seen that it is only with respect to the influence of the school management teams in managing stress that significant differences are present (p<0.05). The respondents who presently teach Grade 7 learners agreed most strongly (3.39) with the factor of school management teams' influence in managing stress. One would now need to see which of the two underlying factors, namely the

perceived influence of school management teams in controlling teaching and learning (FE1.1) or the perceived influence of school management teams in managing educator stress (FE1.2), is responsible for this significant difference. The data presented in Table 4.18 is a summary of the various tests utilised.

Table 4.18: Significance of differences between the three presently taught grade groups with respect to the factors perceived to influence school management teams in controlling teaching and learning and the influence of school management teams to manage stress

Factor	Group	Mean	ANOVA (p-value	Scheffé test			
					G1-3	G4-6	G7
Perceived influence of SMT in controlling teaching & Learning	G1-3	3.36	0.046*	G1-3		*	-
	G4-6	3.06		G4-6	*		-
	G7	3.25		G5-7	-	-	
Influence of SMT to manage stress	G1-3	2.77	0.004**	G1-3		**	-
	G4-6	2.40		G4-6	**		-
	G7	2.48		G5-7	-	-	

* Statistically significant at the 5% level (p>0.01 but p<0.05

** Statistically significant at the 0.1% level (p<0.005)

The data in Table 4.18 shows that it is respondents who teach Grades 4 to 6 who differ significantly from the respondents who teach Grades 1 to 3 in both first-order factors. The difference is larger in the perceptions of the school management teams to manage stress levels and respondents who teach Grades 4 to 6 disagree most strongly. The grade level one to three teachers had the highest mean score (2.77) with respect to the influence of the school management team to manage stress and could be said to partially disagree to being neutral in their perceptions.

4.9.4 Highest educational qualification

The highest educational qualification was collapsed into three groups. The two main factors, namely pivotal aspects of stress in primary school educators (F-Inc.-S) and the influence of the school management teams to manage stress levels (FE2.0), regarding their association with the three highest educational qualification groups were firstly tested

at the multivariate level (MANOVA). Any significant difference at this level was further investigated using ANOVA. A summary of the results is given in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Significance of differences between the various highest educational qualification groups with respect to F_Inc_S and FE2.0

Factor	Group	Mean	MANOVA (p-value)	ANOVA (p-value)	Effect size
Pivotal aspects of stress in primary school teachers	A	3.08	0.011*	0.005**	0.21
	B	3.24			
	C	3.47			
Influence of SMT in managing stress	A	2.84		0.234	0.11
	B	2.95			
	C	2.76			

** Statistically significant at the % level (p<0.01)

A = Diploma/P.G. Certificate/None

B = Degree

C = Honours/Masters

The data in Table 4.19 indicates that the difference at the multivariate level is due to differences in the pivotal aspects of stress in primary school teachers (F_Inc_S). The respondents with the highest educational qualifications had the perceptions that these pivotal aspects occur significantly more often than the lower qualification groups believed it. As this factor is built on six sub-dimensions or first-order factors, one would need to investigate which of the six sub-dimensions was responsible for this multivariate difference. The four sub-dimensions where significant differences were found are given with the data in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Significance of differences between the highest educational qualification groups with respect to the first-order factors present in the pivotal aspects influencing stress (F_Inc_S)

Factor	Group	Mean	MANOVA	ANOVA	Effect size	Hochberg GT2			
							A	B	C
Frequency of adverse stress (FB1.1)	A	3.22	0.039*	0.003**	0.22	A		-	**
	B	3.40				B	-		-
	C	3.71				C	**	-	
Stress due to administrative duties (FC1.2)	A	3.41		0.007**	0.20	A		-	**
	B	3.61				B	-		-
	C	3.87				C	**	-	
Stress due to management (FC1.3)	A	3.01		0.026*	0.18	A		-	-
	B	2.97				B			*
	C	3.33				C	-	*	
Reactions with increased stress (FD1.1)	A	3.70		0.006**	0.21	A		*	**
	B	4.01				B	*		-
	C	4.11				C	**	-	

* Statistically significant at the 5% level (p<0.05

** Statistically significant at the % level (p<0.01)

A = Diploma/P.G. Certificate/None

B = Degree

C = Honours/Masters

The data in Table 4.20 shows that there were significant differences in four of the six sub-dimensions which form the pivotal aspects influencing stress. If one arranges the sub-dimensions according to effect size (as they are standardized values and can be compared directly) then the frequency of adverse experiences (FB1.1) is most important closely followed by reactions associated with increased stress (FD1.1) and stress due to administrative duties (FC1.2). In each of these sub-dimensions the respondents with the highest qualifications also had the higher mean score indicating that they perceived these aspects as occurring more often than did the lower qualification groups. It is likely that respondents with honour's and master's degrees will occupy promotion posts in most schools and with promotion comes larger stress levels due to, among other things, the greater responsibilities, administrative work and accountability coupled to such promotion posts.

4.11 SYNTHESIS OF THE DATA

The data consists of five main sets, namely:

- Biographical information
- Adverse stressful experiences
- Causes of stress
- Impact of stress
- Role of school management teams.

Statistical significant differences are summarised below.

4.11.1 Biographical information and analysis associated with it

Almost 77% (ratio of 3.27 female educators per male educator) of the respondents were female, which is representative of the total population of all educators (both public and private schools) in the Tshwane South District where the ratio is 2.99 female educators per male educator. The slightly higher ratio may be ascribed to the phenomenon that females to males are slightly higher in primary schools. Female respondents on average perceived the frequency of adverse stressful experiences (especially external aspects) which cause stress as occurring statistically significantly more often than male respondents.

The majority of the respondents were in the 20 to 29-year age group with an overall average age of the respondents being between 30 to 35 years of age. The majority, 81% of the respondents, teaches in Grades 1 to 6 (Grades 1 to 3 = 41.4% and Grades 4 to 6 = 39.3%).

There is a probability that the claimed home languages of the respondents teaching in private primary schools in the Tshwane South district may be representative of the home language population in the Tshwane South District. It was found that 48.5% of the respondents claimed to be Afrikaans while 43.5% claimed to be English. The Afrikaans home language respondents have the perception that the frequency of adverse experiences, the stress due to management, the stress due to external aspects and the

consequences of stress levels, occur significantly more often for them than they do for English and the other home language groups. With respect to the influence of the school management teams to manage stress, all three language groups partially disagreed that the school management teams have an influence on the management of the educators' stress, with the English home language group disagreeing less strongly with the factor.

A third of the respondents had less than three years' teaching experience, while another third had more than ten years' experience. The rest had between three and nine years' experience. Sixty percent (60.0%) of the respondents had tenure at their current school of less than three years, while only 13.4% indicated that they had been ten years or longer at their current school. The majority, more than 70% of the respondents, have at least a bachelor or higher education degree.

The respondents with the highest educational qualifications had the perceptions that the frequency of adverse experiences, reactions associated with increased stress and stress due to administrative duties occur significantly more often for them than the lower qualification groups.

4.11.2 Adverse stress experiences

The majority of the respondents responded that they sometimes experience adverse stressful situations such as vast amounts of paper work and the perceived pace at which school activities occurred. Being exposed to certain events is actually the top experience causing high levels of stress for the educators. Unfortunately, the kind of events were not explored in the questionnaire, but based on the structure of the questionnaire in relation to what the other questions probed, it can safely be deduced that the respondents, in all probability, referred to the interpersonal interaction events with either parents, learners or colleagues. Private schools charge much higher school fees than do public schools and as such the parents demand a much higher level of service which in turn can lead to conflict between educators and parents. It has been the experience of this educator that many parents have unrealistic expectations of their children's academic abilities as they have the perception that "money can buy academic performance".

4.11.3 Perceived causes of stress

In a school context, stress may be ascribed to external factors, administrative duties and management issues. It was evident that long working hours (administrative factor) are often perceived as one of the causes of stress. The management factor (such as no recognition from management and lack of communication) was also perceived to cause stress for educators. Ironically, the general perception that classes are too full (40 or more learners) was very low on the list of being an external stressor (mean 2,10). This is probably due to private schools marketing small classes and individual attention to learners and hence classroom numbers are kept low. The participants perceive lack of discipline in the classroom as a stressor (mean 3.44). Again, parents may have unrealistic perceptions of the ability of private schools to manage something which they cannot do in the home environment.

4.11.4 Impact of stress

This section deals with reactions associated with increased stress levels and the consequences of the increased stress levels. The majority of respondents experienced feelings of exhaustion, irritation, of being overworked and even of being burnt out. These feelings, to some extent, have the consequences that educators feel depressed and in some cases cause relationship problems with spouses, family or friends.

4.11.5 Influence of school management teams

Two key factors were researched, namely controlling of teaching and learning and the managing of the educators' stress levels. Overall the responses were neutral, respondents neither disagreeing nor agreeing with the school management teams having the perceived influence to meet the requirements in terms of teaching and learning, and the management of educators' stress. Actually, the average mean was below three for the questions on the management of stress. This suggests that educators need to be trained to manage stressful situations and on how to improve their social and emotional skills. This would need the active involvement of the school management teams in managing the stress levels of educators. Through multiple regression it was found that the factors making the largest significant contribution to the perceived influence of the

school management teams in managing stress was stress due to management, consequences of stress levels and then stress due to external factors. Two of these factors made a negative contribution towards the school management team's influence on managing stress levels, namely stress due to management and consequences due to increased stress levels. This results in a dysfunctional consequence, in that the more school management teams push for improved teaching and learning, the more stress they place on educators and the smaller the chance that the school management teams will be able to support educators with their stress.

4.12 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to analyse the data from the 239 questionnaires. Valuable data was received on the adverse stressful experience of the educators at private primary schools in Tshwane South District, the perceived stressors, the impact of the stress on the educators and their perception of the role the school management teams can play in supporting them with their stress. In Chapter 5 the findings will be discussed.

CHAPTER 5
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 concludes the study. The chapter provides the overview of the research and reports on the research findings. The contribution of the study is also highlighted. The chapter concludes with a discussion of recommendations for primary schools, school management teams and educators in similar contexts, and possible future research.

5.2 RESEARCH SUMMARY

Educators seem to complain about the experience of their perceived stress. As schools are under constant pressure, educators claim to feel overworked. There are many stressors among educators in the private primary schools in the Tshwane South District and school management teams may not always be knowledgeable about the educators' daily routines and obstacles or may not know how to support these educators. Stress among educators needs to be effectively managed to not only avoid mental and physical issues for these educators but also to create a better learning environment for the learners. The review of literature shows that these stressors may have mental and physical consequences on educators and may lead to a negative learning environment.

The general purpose of the study was to help school management teams to realise what factors cause the stress of educators, how they are affected by this phenomenon and to show associations or relationships between the management by school management teams and the stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The central research question refers to what extent school management teams know the causes of stress and how to manage it in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The sub-questions focus on the factors causing the stress of educators, how they are affected by the stress and the association or relationship between the management by school management teams and the stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. The following hypotheses were explored:

H_0 There is statistically no significant relationship between the causes and level of educator stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

H_a There is statistically a significant relationship between the causes and level of educator stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

A quantitative, descriptive method was used in this study. A purposeful sample of 239 participants was chosen. Data was collected by distributing structured questionnaires which were sent via email or followed by educators via a link to an online version of the questionnaire. The results of the study were analysed and interpreted, and data was received about the perceived stressors, the impact of the stress on the educators and their perception of the role the school management teams can play in supporting them with their stress.

5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following are the main findings from the literature and empirical evidence:

5.3.1 Biographical information data

The literature revealed that different factors such as age, education, experience and gender may play a role in how stress is experienced by an educator (Bolton, 2018). Emotional exhaustion for example tends to be lower in older educators, as greater personal accomplishment is associated with older educators (Brunsting, Sreckovic & Lane, 2014).

The empirical evidence confirmed that gender plays a role in how stress is experienced in that it was found that female respondents on average perceived the frequency of adverse stressful experiences and aspects (especially external aspects) that cause stress to occur statistically significantly more often than male respondents. Similarly, it was empirically found that educational qualifications play a role in that respondents with the highest educational qualifications had the perceptions that the frequency of adverse

experiences, reactions associated with increased stress and stress due to administrative duties occur significantly more often for them than for the lower qualification groups.

With respect to home language significant differences were also observed. When testing the two opposing factors, namely pivotal aspects associated with stress (F_Inc_S) with the perceived ability of the school management teams to manage stress (FE2.0) at the multivariate level a significant difference was found between the two multivariate factors. Univariate analysis revealed that the differences were all situated in the pivotal stress factor (F_Inc_S). Further investigations revealed that the Afrikaans home language respondents perceived that the adverse experiences factor (FB1.0), stress due to management (FC1.3), stress due to external aspects (FC1.1), consequences of increased stress levels (FD1.2) and reactions due to increased stress levels (FD1.1) occurred statistically significantly more often than did the respondents who had English and 'other' as home language. The home language groups did not differ significantly with respect to the school management team's ability to manage increased stress levels with both only partially agreeing. This suggests that respondents with Afrikaans as home language have the perception that the pivotal aspects involved with increasing stress levels occur more often than the other home language groups perceive it to be occurring. The reason for this difference is difficult to ascertain but likely to be due to cultural differences. This aspect needs further investigation as such cultural differences are to be found at the national as well as organisational level.

5.3.2 Adverse stressful experiences

Social interaction with various stakeholders such as learners, parents and colleagues is part of a large portion of the work day for educators. This interaction or exposure may cause high levels of stress. This has the impact that educators now have to control not only their own emotional behaviours, but also those of the learners, parents and their colleagues (Akhondi et al., 2017). Educators need to be emotionally and socially competent in their occupation, they need to be self-aware, socially aware, know how to manage their emotions and have good decision-making skills (Johnson, 2018:27).

From the literature review it was established that stressed out educators tend to leave the schools causing their dissatisfaction. Some educators leave schools for other

occupations, resulting in a permanent loss to the profession, while others move from one school to another in search of satisfying working conditions (Ryan et al., 2017:3). Empirically the item with the highest factor loading was the question on whether the respondent (educator) had considered leaving the school due to high levels of stress, confirming the above literature where educators may leave the profession or the current school.

From an empirical perspective the item measuring whether the educators are exposed to events causing high levels of stress had the highest mean score (4.01), confirming the findings of the literature. The literature revealed that the fulfilment of several demanding roles, managing difficult interactions with parents and learners and poor professional relationships contribute to the stress levels of educators (Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienuis, 2008; Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010). Similarly, in a negative environment where the educator-learners and educator-parents' relationships are negative, the stress of the educator will increase when the educator is exposed to these relationships (Darmody & Smyth, 2011; Ryan et al., 2017:4).

5.3.3 Aspects causing stress

Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 partially support the research sub-question 1 in terms of the factors causing the stress of educators. Section 5.2.3 is a direct response to sub-question 1. The literature confirms that the following external aspects cause stress for educators:

- Changes to the teaching curriculum - One of the greatest pressures on educators are the demands from the ever increasing curricula content (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009:1). From an empirical point of view, the majority of the respondents confirmed that they sometimes experience stress due continual changes to the teaching curriculum (mean of 3.07).
- Learner discipline - Discipline in classrooms plays a big role in the educator's stress in that disciplined classes lower the stress levels of the educator. Educators are also less stressed when learners seem happier in the classroom (Darmody & Smyth, 2011). The literature also revealed that educators are constantly under stress due to poor discipline among learners and the managing of difficult interactions with parents and colleagues. Despite this finding, it still appears as if

this aspect is not effectively dealt with in the training and professional development of educators ((Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienuis, 2008; Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010; Schulze & Steyn, 2007). The majority of the respondents confirmed that lack of good learner discipline in the classrooms do sometimes cause them to experience feelings of stress (mean of 3.44).

- The literature revealed that educators are constantly under stress due to several aspects including the lack of parental involvement (Schulze & Steyn, 2007). In addition, although parents may be involved, the educators need to manage difficult interactions with parents or engage in educator-parent relationships where the school environment is negative, causing stress for the educator. When the school environment is positive, the stress for the educator seems to be less (Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienuis, 2008). School climate thus is seen as a vital part of the job satisfaction and managing levels of stress (Darmody & Smyth, 2011; Klassen, Usher & Bong, 2010; Ryan et al., 2017:4). The lack of parental involvement was confirmed by the empirical study as an aspect sometimes causing stress for the educators with a mean score of 3.21.

Certain administrative aspects also contribute to the stress of the educators. From a literature perspective, the workload of educators, including the demands from the ever increasing curricula content, and the higher expectations from the parents and school management teams in general are stated to be a huge cause of their stress (Akhondi, Pourshafei & Asgari, 2017:13-14; Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu & Van Rooyen, 2009:1; Rothmann, 2003:17; Ryan et al., 2017:3). A third of educators also consider their work as mentally stressful (Borg, 1990). The empirical results confirmed that the workload, (educators working more than the expected 40 hours per week), had the highest mean score (3.90) and hence it was perceived to be occurring often which is likely to increase stress levels amongst teachers.

Although the size of classrooms is a contentious issue in public schools, an interesting finding was, in both the literature and the empirical evidence that class size does not seem to have a significant impact on the stress of educators. Darmody and Smyth (2011) argue that, even though discipline plays a role in an educator's stress levels, class sizes tend to have little impact on the educator's stress levels (Darmody & Smyth, 2011). The respondents from the empirical study also rate more than 40 learners in classrooms as

a low-level stressor. It only had a mean of 2.10 which was the lowest of the 13 items that may influence stress levels. This finding could, however, be due to private schools seldom, if ever, experiencing class sizes as large as 40 learners. Any educator who has taught classes that vary from 20 to 40 learners will tell that it is much more difficult to maintain good discipline in classes with 40 learners or more.

Although the lack of effective communication was viewed by the respondents as a factor that may cause stress, it is not reflected in the literature. The lack of effective communication may be unique to private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. It is also possible that private schools still operate in the hierarchical and bureaucratic system whilst transformation efforts require a more collaborative system of communication. Educators possibly perceive that the school management teams' members need to be participative in their communication and allow for more freedom to "speak one's mind" when it comes to matters of school management.

5.3.4 Impact of stress

Educators seem to experience chronic stress due to the constant stressors over a period of time. The literature revealed that stress can be healthy or unhealthy and may manifest either at school level, in an educator's personal life or in both. Unhealthy stress can cause the following:

- employee dissatisfaction
- negativity
- physical and emotional exhaustion
- depression
- depersonalisation
- reduced personal accomplishment
- absenteeism
- burnout (Botha, 2013:83; Friedman, Tidd, Curall & Tsai, 2003:40; Jackson et al., 2006:263; Rothmann, 2003:20; Ryan et al., 2017:3; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015:189).

Educators seem to be more and more physically and emotionally exhausted. Even though some claim that weekends are long enough to recover, others claim they cannot keep up with the pace expected of them. This clearly has an impact on their effectiveness in the classroom as such, as stressed educators tend to reduce the time they usually need to prepare for lessons using the hours to recover or rest. In addition, the negative psychological and physical condition(s) of the educator may affect the educator-learner interaction in the classroom (Herman, 2017:91; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015:189; Steinhardt, Smith, Faulk & Gloria, 2010).

In the empirical analysis, the causes of stress as argued in the literature were confirmed by the feeling of exhaustion having a high mean score (4.18), indicating that educators often experience these feelings. Closely related to this were feelings of being overworked, irritation, burnout and depression.

This section has responded to sub-question two of the research, on how educators are affected by stress.

5.3.5 Influence of school management teams

This deals with the perceived impact of school management teams on teaching and learning and the management of stress experienced by educators. It is a direct response to the research sub-question three, namely the relationship between the management by school management teams and the stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District. According to the literature schools should have a clear and joint vision in order to bring alignment between individuals. Stress can be reduced if school management teams can create an environment with a feeling of purpose and togetherness, by appreciating educators, increasing social support in the school environment and by good communication (Akhondi et al., 2017:24; Darmody & Smyth, 2011; Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999; Ma & Mac-Millan, 1999). The principal, together with the school management team, should have a clear system in place, known to all stakeholders, that provides for the management of teaching and learning, support of educators including communication with parents and the community, and is aimed at improving the context of learner achievement. Good school management teams are

those that can motivate and inspire educators and so raise the standards of learner performance (Bush, Joubert, Kiggunu & Van Rooyen, 2009).

The literature also revealed that good relationships between colleagues and cooperation can lead to an organisational motivational culture which establishes organisational excellence (Marques, 2006). Even though educator-colleague relationships are important, educators are encouraged to remember that the educators who they associate with are connected to the kind of educator they will become. Unhappy and disgruntled educators should be avoided to avoid spreading that type of mood or environment to other educators. Building a healthy school community with your peers is thus important (Darwich, 2018).

With regard to stress management, there is a tendency to leave stress coping strategies to individuals or, even worse, to school management teams as helping staff with such strategies are often neglected (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2012:229). Educators feel that additional training should be provided in dealing with the stress demands (Bush et al., 2009). Educators undergoing training in professional development have been shown to be more confident in their teaching and these educators tend to have a higher rate of job satisfaction (Ma & Mac-Millan, 1999).

The effective and efficient management of stress and addressing the needs of educators can have a positive impact on the education process as it creates a caring culture, improves peer support, decreases work pressure, creates feelings of personal accomplishment and improves the educator's job satisfaction (Vaughan, 2013:12). It is thus imperative that school management teams should create opportunities for educators to enhance their work, emotional and social learning skills to assist them in coping with unnecessary stress. To do so the school management teams should build emotional awareness among educators, have clear expectations and objectives, be aware of cultural differences and recognise the need for self-care and so reduce personal stress (Johnson, 2018:27).

Empirically, the majority of respondents in the sample tended towards a neutral perception, namely that they neither disagreed or agreed with the school management teams having the perceived influence to manage teaching and learning and educator

stress. It is also evident that respondents agreed more strongly with the items on the school management teams influencing teaching and learning than they did with managing the stress levels of educators. The average mean was below 3.0 for the questions on the management of stress, namely educators need to be trained to manage stressful situations, improving of educators' social and emotional skills and the active involvement of the school management teams in the stress of educators.

5.3.6 Conclusion on the relationship between the findings and the research questions

Overall the literature review and the empirical data answered the main research question and its sub-questions, save for sub-question three, where the literature dictates that school management teams should be more active in management of the stress of the educators. The empirical study revealed that the association or relationship between the management by school management teams and stress experienced by educators in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District is not significant, confirming hypotheses H_0, namely:

There is statistically no significant relationship between the causes and level of educator stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District.

5.3.7 Research contribution

Despite the limitations of the study, as stated in paragraph 3.7, it may be concluded that the findings of the study offer original contributions to the knowledge on stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools. Four areas present themselves:

Firstly, in terms of theory, the study makes a unique contribution to the management of stress in the education sector, but with specific reference to private primary schools. On a general theoretical level, readers of the study, especially educators and members of school management teams, will develop a better understanding of the frequency of adverse stressful experiences, aspects causing stress, perceived impact of increased

stress levels and the influence of school management teams on teaching, learning and educator stress.

The second valuable contribution of the study is that the questionnaire can be applied at private and public primary schools. It may even be applied at secondary schools. The questionnaire could be used for analysing similar situations and has the potential to be developed further for application in a wider range of situations.

Thirdly, from an empirical perspective, the study offers a useful contribution to the perceptions of participants employed in a real-world setting on stress and the management thereof at a private primary school level.

Lastly, in terms of a policy contribution, the study offers information for developing of policies and procedures for stress management in a school environment that could be beneficial to the various role players. The study also points to the need to strengthen the debate on stress management and provide clearer and more widely-accepted interventions for accommodating stressed educators in the school environment.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this section are based on the findings, conclusions and limitations of this study. Recommendations are formulated for the school environment as well as for future research.

The following recommendations are for the school environment:

- Policy and procedures should be put in place on stress management for educators in order to deal with the modern demands of an educator. The policy should, inter alia, provide for both the internal and external role players, including their roles and obligations.
- Conscious training of all role players on the policy and procedure for stress management should be enforced but in a collaborative way. Such training should not be a once-off occurrence, but should start at induction and then be regularly repeated as refresher courses thereafter with different school management team

members acting as facilitators. As and when an amendment to the policy or procedure occurs, all role players should be given the opportunity to reflect and openly comment on them as such openness on the side of the school management teams can lead to greater commitment from the educators and so avoid the anathema of contrived compliance. This should be the responsibility of the school management teams.

- School management teams should be accountable for the effective implementation of the stress management policy and procedures.

The following are recommended for future research:

- As the study was limited to private primary schools in Tshwane South District, the study can be done at all private primary schools, public schools or even secondary schools in order to investigate the stress management practices at these schools.
- This study examined the conceptualisation of stress management for a purposive sample. Further research could be undertaken to explore whether findings may differ if the sample existed of employees from different categories, such as educators versus administrative staff, educators versus school management teams or differentiation based on other variables such as type of appointment (temporary/permanent), post grade levels, gender, race, age or culture.

5.5 REFLECTIONS

Although I had to research various topics for numerous assignment purposes during my studies, this study taught me that academic research was not the same as the so-called research I did. To deliver a quality study that contributes to the knowledge of the phenomenon, one needs to meticulously follow the research road map. The journey started with identifying the topic or problem - known as the knowledge gap - that I wanted to study. Once this was done, I was required to formulate the overall research question and sub-questions that I thought would address the phenomenon under study – in this case stress management in a private primary school environment. The choice of quantitative research influenced the research methodology in relation to the research questions, participant selection, data collection instruments, procedures and analysis. The last stretch of the journey was to present the findings in a clear and precise manner,

and to provide definite recommendations that would contribute to knowledge on the phenomenon. Being a primary school educator and not being an academic, nor research or statistically oriented, I was “put through the mill” on this journey. However, with the assistance and guidance of my supervisor I managed to succeed in this arduous research journey in which, in my opinion, I did justice to the dissertation.

I am optimistic that the findings of this study will provide a better understanding of stress management practices in a school environment. I am further optimistic that the findings will provide insights on what should be contained in a policy and procedure to ensure fair and just stress management at a school. The theory on stress management on a school level has been further expanded through the detailed literature analysis and findings. The study makes a unique contribution to the management of stress in the education sector, but with specific reference to private primary schools.

5.6 FINAL CONCLUSION

Chapter 5 provides concluding explanations on the overview of the research and a summary of the findings. The research limitations are stated and discussed, and the research contribution is highlighted. The chapter concludes with recommendations for the school environment and future research.

With this study I attempted to create a balanced view on the realities regarding the stress management practices in a private primary school environment, the perception of the educators and the expectations of what school management teams should do. My hope is that this study will make a positive, unique contribution to the on-going narrative about the management of stress at a school level.

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APPENDIX A

The causes of stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane North District

SECTION A

Please answer the following questions by crossing an (X) in the relevant block.

EXAMPLE FOR COMPLETION OF SECTION A	
QUESTION 1: Your gender (If you are male, then mark as follows):	
Male	X 1
Female	2

A1. What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

A2. To which age group, in years, do you belong?

20-29 years	1
30-39 years	2
40-49 years	3
50-59 years	4
60 years and older	5

A3. Which phase do you currently work in?

Foundation Phase (Grade 1-3)	1
Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6)	2
Senior Phase (Grade 7)	3

A4. What is your home language? (Mark one option only)

English	1
Afrikaans	2
Zulu	3
Xhosa	4
Other (Specify):	5

A5. Number of years of experience as an educator?

0-1 years	1
2-3 years	2
4-6 years	3
7-9 years	4
10 years or more	5

A6. Number of years in your current school?

0-1 years	1
2-3 years	2
4-6 years	3
7-9 years	4
10 years or more	5

A7. Highest educational qualification achieved?

No qualification	1
Bachelors	2
Diploma	3
Postgraduate certificate	4
Honours	5
Masters	6
Doctoral	7

SECTION B

EXAMPLE FOR COMPLETING SECTION B

Read each statement carefully.

Use the following 5 Point Likert scale to indicate the number that best applies to each statement by crossing an (X) in the relevant block.

1 = Rarely	2 = Seldom	3 = Sometimes	4 = Often	5 = Frequent

How often do you:

Experience stress as an educator? (If sometimes, then place a cross over 3 as shown.)

How often:

B1. Are you as educator exposed to events which cause high levels of stress?

1	2	3	4	5

B2. Do you feel that you cannot keep up the pace of school activities?

1	2	3	4	5

B3. Have you considered leaving your school due to high levels of stress?

1	2	3	4	5

B4. Have you experienced high stress levels because of vast amount of paper work to be completed?

1	2	3	4	5

B5. Have you thought about leaving the teaching profession due to reasons that are stress related?

1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C

To what extent do you experience stress due to:

C1. Working more than the expected 40 hours per week?

1	2	3	4	5

C2. The uncertainty of your position or post at your school?

1	2	3	4	5

C3. Insufficient money to cope with the standard of living?

1	2	3	4	5

C4. Continual changes to the teaching curriculum?

1	2	3	4	5

C5. Duties associated with continuous assessment?

1	2	3	4	5

C6. Limited teaching resources?

1	2	3	4	5

C7. Administration associated with your teaching duties?

1	2	3	4	5

C8. More than 40 learners in classes?

1	2	3	4	5

C9. Lack of effective communication?

1	2	3	4	5

C10. No recognition from management for the work I do?

1	2	3	4	5

C11. Lack of good learner discipline in classrooms?

1	2	3	4	5

C12. Lack of parental involvement in school activities?

1	2	3	4	5

C13. Parental involvement on my professional terrain?

1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D

Since you started working as an educator to what extent have you experienced increased levels of stress leading to:

D1. Health problems requiring medical treatment?

1	2	3	4	5

D2. Using more prescribed medicine?

1	2	3	4	5

D3. Feelings of depression?

1	2	3	4	5

D4. Feelings of being overworked?

1	2	3	4	5

D5. Being sloppy about your personal appearance?

1	2	3	4	5

D6. Feelings of exhaustion?

1	2	3	4	5

D7. Feelings of irritation?

1	2	3	4	5

D8. Experiencing relationship problems between you and your spouse, friends or family?

1	2	3	4	5

D9. Feelings of burnout?

1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E

Read each statement carefully. Please give your opinion as to your agreement about each statement about the School Management Team (SMT).

Being a SMT member involves them with managing the stress levels of educators?

If you disagree with this statement, make a cross (X) over the 2:

1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neither	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

E1. Being a SMT member involves them with managing the stress levels of educators?

1	2	3	4	5

E2. In my school, I have been exposed to training on how to manage stressful situations?

1	2	3	4	5

E3. My SMT is actively involved in managing stress of educators?

1	2	3	4	5

E4. My SMT supports me in improving my social and emotional skills?

1	2	3	4	5

E5. My SMT recognises that educators come to school with many of the same external life stressors?

1	2	3	4	5

E6. My SMT motivates me towards achieving my personal goals?

1	2	3	4	5

E7. My SMT sets clear expectations regarding my role as educator?

1	2	3	4	5

E8. My SMT has a system in place for the effective monitoring of teaching and learning?

1	2	3	4	5

E9. My SMT has a caring attitude regarding the climate of teaching?

1	2	3	4	5

E10. I give my full support to my SMT?

1	2	3	4	5

E11. The active involvement and support from my SMT will decrease my stress levels as educator.

1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation in this questionnaire.

To be informed of the final research findings, please contact Judes van Staden via email on judes9202@gmail.com

APPENDIX B

JJ van Staden
Postnet Suite 366
Private bag X 20009
Garsfontein
0042

Tel: 082 929 9580
Email: judes9202@gmail.com

The causes of stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South district.

Dear respondent

This questionnaire forms part of my master's research entitled: The causes of stress and its management by school management teams (SMTs) in private primary schools in the Tshwane South District, for the degree of M.Ed. (Educational Management) at the University of South Africa under the guidance of Professor Emeritus B. Grobler. Educators of private primary schools in the Tshwane South District are invited to take part in this survey. The aim of this survey is to establish which organisational factors cause the greatest stress among educators, how they are affected by this phenomenon either physically or emotionally and, finally, to establish if there is a significant link between educator stress and the management thereof by SMT's. The findings of this study could lead SMTs, if not yet so, to be aware of what causes stress to their educators, how it affects the educators in their schools and guide them in having a positive influence on these stress levels of educators in this area.

You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire, comprising of five sections as honestly and frankly as possible and according to your personal views and experience. This questionnaire is for research purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete.

Your anonymity will be ensured; thus, your age, gender, languages, qualifications and occupational position will contribute towards a more comprehensive analysis. Information in this questionnaire will remain confidential and will be used for research purposes only. This survey is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from it at any stage. The findings of the research will be made available on request as soon as the study is completed. By completing this questionnaire, you have agreed to participate in this research.

Yours sincerely
JJ van Staden

APPENDIX C

UNISA university of south africa

UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Ref: 2019/04/17/49232932/07/MC
Name: Ms JJ Van Staden Student no: 49232932

Date: 2019/04/17

Dear Ms Van Staden

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2019/04/17 to 2022/04/17

Researcher(s): Name: Ms JJ Van Staden
E-mail address: judes9202@gmaii.com
Telephone: +27 82 929 9580

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof B Grobler
E-mail address: bennieg@uj.ac.za
Telephone: +27 83 638 9821

Title of research:

The causes of stress and its management by school management teams in private primary schools in the Tshwane South district.

Qualification: M. Ed in Educational Leadership and Management

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Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2019/04/14 to 2022/04/17.

The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2019/04/14 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.

7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2022/04/17. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number 2019/04/17/49232932/07/ MC should be clearly indicated on al/ forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,

Prof AT Motlhabane
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motlhat@unisa.ac.za

Prof PM Sebate
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